The Testimony of Daniel,
or
The time of the end

CHAPTER 1

'The Scripture of truth' (Dan. 10:21)

A peculiar Gentile interest belongs to the book of Daniel, for, although it never fails to keep in view the two great foci of all prophecy, namely (1) Israel and Jerusalem, and, (2) The kingdom of Christ at His Second Coming, nevertheless, its prophecies are largely occupied with a period when Israel are set aside, and during which dominion over the earth is held by Gentile powers. This period is known as the 'times of the Gentiles', and if the witness of the book was important when the times of the Gentiles were in their infancy, it is certainly not less so for us when those times have nearly reached their close.

Before taking up the prophecy as a whole, it may be as well to face some of the critical attacks upon the book so that we may all, without hesitation or reserve, follow its teaching as a true revelation from heaven. De Wette speaks of it as 'fiction'; Cornill calculates that it was written in 164 B.C., while modern critics generally hold that it should be dated from the period of the Maccabean wars. This means, if it is true, that the book is but a 'pious fraud', that some of its 'prophecies' were not written until after the event, and that, consequently, while it may be an interesting relic of Jewish apocalyptic literature, it is that and nothing more. Among other arguments for the lateness of the book Dean Farrar brought forward:

1 The mention of Greek musical instruments in chapter 3.
2 The mention of Belshazzar as king of Babylon.
3 The use of some official titles.
The critic criticised

As to the first of these, who does not know that the Phoenicians linked up the known world by the medium of their merchandise, and that the tin of our own Cornwall might equally as well have found its way into Babylon as musical instruments from Greece? Since Dean Farrar wrote, however, excavations at Nippur have shown that commercial communication was established between Babylon and Greece 900 years before Daniel!

As to the second, a visit to the British Museum will prove that king Nabonidus associated his son Bel-sar-utsur (i.e., Belshazzar) with himself upon the throne, which incidentally shows why Belshazzar was able to offer Daniel only the third place in the kingdom (Dan. 5:16).

With regard to the third argument, the allegation is that the word ‘master’ (rab-saris) in Daniel 1:3 indicates a late date, yet the monuments have now yielded this very title. So also the word ‘herald’ (karoz) in Daniel 3:4 was said to be identical with the Greek word kerux, thus showing the lateness of the book; but again the monuments by their silent witness have since shown it to be a proper Semitic title.

The testimony of language

We now turn from these vain and refuted criticisms to the testimony of the book itself, and the first feature we deal with is its language. Most students are aware of the peculiarity that it is written partly in Hebrew (like the rest of the Old Testament), and partly in Aramaic. The Hebrew portions are Daniel 1:1 to 2:4-, and Daniel 8:1 to 12:13, the Aramaic portion being Daniel 2:4 to 7:28.

The words: ‘Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack’ are not a strict translation of the passage. The literal rendering is: ‘Then spake the Chaldeans — Aramith — O king, live for ever’, the word Aramith indicating that from thence the language ceases to be Hebrew and becomes Aramaic. Now Aramaic was the language of
mart and chancellory* throughout the known world at the
time Daniel was in Babylon; its fitness as a vehicle of
inspiration for this portion of the book will be better
appreciated when we have seen the strong Gentile
character of Daniel 2 to 7. At the moment, however, we
are thinking more of the evidence, which this language
constitutes, of the historic accuracy of Daniel, than of its
bearing upon the subject of the book.

Daniel must have been written in a period when both
Hebrew and Aramaic were understood by the people.
In the days of Hezekiah, Israel, as a people, did not
understand Aramaic:

"Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language
(Aramaic); for we understand it: and talk not with us in the Jews' language
in the ears of the people that are on the wall" (2 Kings
18:26).

Here, Hebrew was known by the common people, but
Aramaic was unknown. When Ezra read the law of Moses
publicly, after the return from captivity, we learn that,
"they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and
gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading"
(Neh. 8:8). The Talmud explains that Ezra, after reading
the passage in Hebrew, translated it into Aramaic, thus
making what became known as the Chaldee paraphrase.

The book of Daniel, therefore, must have been written
at a time after Hezekiah, and before Hebrew ceased to be
spoken among Israel, and this simple evidence of language
forces us to place the period of Daniel's prophecy exactly
where orthodox teaching places it, namely, during the
period of the Babylonian captivity and onward.

Positive testimony

But after all is said there remains for the believer a
higher Authority than the testimony of the monuments or
the deductions of men. Daniel's prophecy finds its goal in

* mart and chancellory = commerce and, finance and law.
the kingdom of Christ, and, moreover, its strongest proof in the testimony of Christ Himself:

'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place' (Matt. 24:15).

Notice the nature of this testimony — 'Daniel the prophet'. While Matthew speaks of Isaiah the prophet, Christ Himself speaks of but two in this way — and, significantly, two whose integrity is most challenged and whose witness was directed to the Gentiles, 'Daniel the prophet' and 'Jonah the prophet' (Matt. 12:39).

We are asked by the modernist to believe that Christ spoke only the language of His day. Be it so. But what shall we do with the majestic assertion recorded within the space of twenty verses from the Lord's confirmation of Daniel's prophecy?

'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away' (Matt. 24:35).

Is this truth, or is it bombast, aye and worse — blasphemy? Again, when the Lord was brought before Caiaphas the High Priest, He bore testimony to the prophetic truth of Daniel:

'I adjure thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven' (Matt. 26:63,64).

This, said Caiaphas, was blasphemy, for he realized that in so saying Christ was appropriating to Himself the prophecy of Daniel 7. So that once again, in that solemn hour of trial, and with death near at hand, the Saviour bears personal testimony to the truth of the book of Daniel. If Christ could by any means prove to be mistaken, all would fall to the ground. It would not matter to us who wrote Daniel's prophecy, or what it contained — for it could be meaningless, and its fulfilment could never be accomplished. If Christ should prove to be fallible, Bible study would be a waste of time; things far more important
than the visions of Nebuchadnezzar would concern us; our very salvation would become a myth and a dream; and we should be of all men most miserable.

But such, happily, is not the case. Daniel's prophecy will stand when the last of his critics have perished, and as we consider together its inspired pages, there will be found ample intrinsic proof of its truth. He who could preserve Daniel from the lions, can, and will, shut the mouths of all Daniel's critics, and in the day of Christ bring forth His Word in all its triumph and glory. May we ever be kept heart-whole regarding all His Word!

The times of the Gentiles begin (Dan. 1:1,2)

'In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god' (Dan. 1:1,2).

With these words the book of Daniel opens, and it may not be too much to say that they are only paralleled by the words of Acts 28 in their burden of crisis and dispensational change. With such vast issues hanging upon these momentous words, vast because they cover the whole sweep of Gentile dominion, and vaster still because they lead steadily on to that kingdom of Christ which is to last for ever, with such issues and such a burden, no pains should be spared in acquainting ourselves with all that God has written for our learning in relation to this crisis in the history of man. Space will not permit of the full quotation of Jeremiah 25:1-26. We can but point out one or two features that connect this passage with the opening words of Daniel.

The reader will be struck by the fact that whereas Daniel 1:1 speaks of the 'third' year of Jehoiakim, Jeremiah 25:1 speaks of the 'fourth' year of that same king in connection with the coming of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem. This apparent discrepancy has not passed
unnoticed by the critic, and is one of his many ‘proofs’ of the untrustworthiness of the book of Daniel.

The Hebrew word translated ‘came’ in Daniel 1:1 is בֹּ (bo), and it frequently has the sense of ‘went’ or ‘marched’. This, however, has been denied. Dr. Samuel Davidson says: ‘The verb בֹּ does not mean to set out — but to arrive at’ (Introduction to the O.T., Vol. III., p. 181), and, when men of such standing and authority speak thus, who are we to oppose them? Humility is indeed a grace to seek and preserve, but while Galatians 2 remains for our encouragement, we may still dare to bring all statements to the touchstone of the Word. Dr. Davidson’s statement but illustrates the uncritical character of so-called ‘higher criticism’, for it has been computed that the Hebrew word בֹּ is used in the sense of ‘to set out’ in each of the five books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and six out of the twelve minor prophets!

Let us look at Jonah 1:3 and translate it as Dr. Davidson would have it: ‘And Jonah ... went down to Joppa, and he found a ship arriving at Tarshish’! If this could be sense, then in some miraculous way Jonah would have no sooner set foot on board at Joppa than he would have ‘arrived’ at Tarshish. Doubtless this would have made the journey far more pleasant than it actually was, but the simple fact is that the Hebrew word בֹּ does mean that the ship was ‘going’ or ‘setting out’ for Tarshish. The plain fact of Daniel 1 and Jeremiah 25 is that the former writer tells us the year in which Nebuchadnezzar ‘set out’ from Babylon, while the latter tells us when he arrived. Moreover, Jeremiah tells us what occupied Nebuchadnezzar on his journey from one capital to the other:

‘Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah’ (Jer. 46:2).
Instead therefore of discovering a discrepancy in the narrative of Scripture, we have the obvious fact that Nebuchadnezzar took time to accomplish his march from Babylon to Jerusalem, and was obliged to meet and overcome Pharaoh at Carchemish by the Euphrates before he could arrive.

In Jeremiah 25:3 the prophet reminded Israel that since the thirteenth year of Josiah (see Jer. 1:1,2) the word of the Lord had come urging them to turn from their evil, and because they had not turned He said:

‘Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land ... and this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years’ (Jer. 25:9-11).

What God therefore had threatened, He brought to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and the historic record of the captivity of Jehoiakim is found in 2 Chronicles 36, the last chapter of the Hebrew Bible!

Yet with all this apparent on the surface of Scripture, and needing no more scholarship than ability to read in one’s mother tongue, Kuenen in his *Historic Critique de l’Ancien Testament* has the audacity to say:

‘We know by the Book of Jeremiah that no such event (as the siege of Jerusalem, Daniel 1:1) took place in the reign of Jehoiakim’.

‘We know’! We also know that it is written: ‘Professing themselves to be wise they became fools’ and by such statements they demonstrate that they are but ‘blind leaders of the blind’.

Jehoiakim was appointed king of Judah by Pharaoh-nechoh in the place of Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:34). He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. He was succeeded by Jehoiachin. In the reign of the latter, Nebuchadnezzar carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, whereas Daniel 1:1,2 tells us that at the first he only carried away a part.
Jehoiachin or Jeconiah is deprived of the Jehovah element in his name, and as Coniah, is utterly rejected by the Lord:

"Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:30).

It is evident that Judah is passing; dominion is leaving them and is being transferred for the time being to the Gentiles. This is emphasized by such statements as Daniel 1:2, ‘And the Lord gave ... into his hand’ or Jeremiah 25:1, ‘The fourth year of Jehoiakim ... that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar’. The times of the Gentiles had therefore begun. And so with Zedekiah the glory departs, and Ezekiel 21 reveals the condition of things that will obtain ‘until He come’:

‘And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord GOD; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until He come Whose right it is; and I will give it Him’ (Ezek. 21:25-27).

Daniel’s prophecies are occupied with this period of overturning, of the exalting of the base and abasing of the high. ‘This shall not be the same’ saith the Lord — ‘This shall not be this’ as the Hebrew reads, i.e., Nebuchadnezzar’s dominion and dynasty would not be a real continuance of the throne of David. It would be in character rather a rule and dominion of wild beasts. The words: ‘It shall be no more, until He come’ leave us in no doubt that the throne thus vacated shall be occupied by none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

The times of the Gentiles are characterized by one great feature, marked by the Lord in Luke 21:24: ‘And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled’. The kingdoms that succeeded Babylon may have been larger or smaller, more powerful or weaker, more autocratic or less so, but the one
essential characteristic of Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Turkey, and the present (1930) mandatory power, is the Gentile domination of Jerusalem. That is the great distinguishing feature, and will only be removed when 'He comes Whose right it is'.

Historic foreshadowings (Dan. chapters 1, 3, 6)

While the prophetic section of Daniel necessarily makes the great appeal of the book, lovers of the Word remember that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable', so that the narrative portions, giving details of the lives and experiences of Daniel and his friends, must have their place in the book and its witness. Let us therefore seek to gather the lesson of chapter 1.

We have already seen that the times of the Gentiles began with the fourth year of Jehoiakim, for that is said to be the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 25:1). We see also that a new dispensation must have begun when we compare Daniel 1:1,2 with 1 Samuel 5:

'And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Eben-zer unto Ashdod ... and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD' (1 Sam. 5:1-3).

No such thing takes place at Babylon, however. Times have changed and, in agreement with that change, Nebuchadnezzar could take the sacred vessels from the house of God, and put them in the treasure house of his god without drawing upon himself any visible sign of disapproval.

While this may have been so, God's attitude towards the evil nature of idolatry remained unaltered, and uncompromising opposition to it in all its aspects was manifested by Daniel and his three brethren. This we shall see set forth in three ways:
Chapter 1

1. The refusal to eat or drink food that had been offered to idols (chapter 1).

2. The refusal to bow down to the golden image set up by Nebuchadnezzar (chapter 3).

3. The refusal to offer prayer to the king of Persia (chapter 6).

The names of four of the captives of Judah who were chosen for preparation to stand before the king were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Each of these names contains a reference to the one true God, El, or Jehovah. The prince of the eunuchs changed these names, introducing the nomenclature of heathen deities in the place of the names of the Lord. Changed names, however, do not necessarily indicate changed hearts, and so we read: 'but Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat' (1:8). Daniel’s purpose and his choice of 'pulse' had no reference to vegetarianism; it went deeper and constituted a protest against idolatry.

There were two ways in which Daniel would have become defiled by eating the king’s meat. The first relates to the case of slaughtered animals, in connection with which it is written:

‘Whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel ... that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people ... for it is the blood that maketh an ATONEMENT’ (Lev. 17:10,11).

Here is the first great exposure of Babylonian error — it has no regard for the atonement: it perpetuates, in its doctrine, the way of Cain.

The second reason for Daniel’s action was that it was forbidden for the Israelites to eat meat which had been offered to idols (Exod. 34:15). Note also the following:

‘But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils (demons), and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils (demons)’ (1 Cor. 10:20).

That this wicked practice will be reintroduced with the revival of Babylon at the time of the end, Revelation 2:20
testifies: 'That woman Jezebel, that teaches ... to eat things sacrificed to idols'.

The noble stand of Daniel and his fellows is the more remarkable, and shows the wonder of the grace of God, when we remember that they were eunuchs. This maltreatment had been foretold by Isaiah:

'Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon' (Isa. 39:6,7).

This chapter closes the first half of Isaiah, and indicates the period of Gentile dominion before the cry of restoration is sounded, with which Isaiah 40 opens.

Worship or fire

As a perverted result of the dream and interpretation of Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar proceeds to establish emperor-worship and state idolatry. The image of gold that he set up in the plain of Dura may or may not have been the figure of a man; we are not told. But when we know something of the obscenity of paganism, and read the hints given in Ezekiel 16:17; 23:14 and 7:20, we can be fairly certain of the character of this abomination. While it does not seem necessary or fitting to enlarge upon this awful subject here, the reader will find much food for solemn thought in the 42nd appendix to The Companion Bible, which would suggest that Daniel 1 and 3, taken together, are associated with the devilish doctrine of Jezebel, 'fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols'.

Something of the symbolic meaning of the image is indicated in its dimensions. Its height was 60 cubits, its breadth was 6 cubits, and its worship was accompanied by music played upon six different kinds of instruments, all of which are specified in Daniel 3:5,10 and 15. At the opening of Gentile times, therefore, we meet with the significant numbers 60 and 6.
The same is true of the opening of Israel's kingdom. Goliath of Gath is described in 1 Samuel 17:4-7. His height was 6 cubits and a span, his armour was made up of 6 pieces, namely, helmet, coat, greaves, target, spear and shield, the weight of the spear's head being 600 shekels of iron.

Later we are to learn that the great image representing Gentile dominion is to be destroyed by the impact of a stone (Dan. 2:34), a fact which removes all need for speculation as to why David, Israel's king, decided to go out against Goliath with sling and stone, or why God used that one smooth stone to bring down the enemy of His people. David was but foreshadowing what Daniel was to interpret.

Who can read the words of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in their reply to the king, without feeling impelled to pray for like precious faith?

'O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God Whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up' (Dan. 3:16-18).

'We are not careful'. — If we argue long enough, we can often 'prove' anything. It is sometimes the truest course resolutely to refuse to debate a question. If it is wrong, it is wrong, and that should suffice. James 1:22 throws light upon this point: 'But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves' (paralogizomai = arguing yourselves aside).

'But if not'. Here is the supreme stand of faith. It is one thing to serve God Who promises as a return to provide food, raiment, health and protection — there is sometimes too much of this bargaining element in our faith and service — but it is another thing, and comes as a shock to some, to face the fact that some of God's most faithful children have suffered hunger, shipwreck, cruel scourgings and mockings, even death itself. Yet none can read
Romans 8:35-37 or Hebrews 11 without seeing that from the days of the martyr Abel, or of the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul, the noble words of the three friends have always had their place.

Just how far the church of the One Body will come into contact with the outer fringe of anti-Christian days is not revealed, but it is quite within the range of possibility that some readers of this magazine may have to stand against both the inducements and the persecution of incipient Babylonianism; if any do, let them remember Daniel 3 and take courage.

The one thing that remains throughout the ages is the presence of the Lord. These men may not escape the fire, but Nebuchadnezzar will have to testify:

‘Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the (a) Son of God ... Who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him’ (Dan. 3:25-28).

For the comfort and encouragement of Israel in the time of their trouble, Isaiah 43:1-3 is written: ‘When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned’, for as in passing through the waters, the Lord can say, ‘I will be with thee’.

The den of lions

While no explanation is given by Daniel as to how it was that he was not included in the order to worship the golden image or how he escaped the penalty for refusing, there is, notwithstanding, a full exhibition of Daniel’s faithfulness under trial recorded in Daniel 6. As we read the story we are impressed with the fact that here is a kingdom inferior to that of Babylon, though the king himself is far more humane than the earlier monarch. Nebuchadnezzar was an autocrat, ‘whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive’ (5:19), but Darius, king of the Medes and Persians, is shackled by the power of his servants. Playing upon the personal vanity that
could hardly in those days be absent from an Eastern king, these servants set a trap for Daniel. As was expected, Daniel quietly ignores the decree concerning prayer, and is apprehended. We know the story well. In the issue, an angel closes the mouths of the lions, and Daniel’s faithfulness is acknowledged. Just as the fire slew those men who bound the three Hebrew friends (Dan. 3), so the lions slay the men who had plotted against Daniel. A word of comfort and encouragement from these two records of tested faithfulness has been published in an earlier volume and is worth repetition here.

Nebuchadnezzar represents absolute autocracy. The king in whose hand was the power of life and death, tried to kill these three friends, and could not. Darius represents a limited monarchy. Here we have a king who wanted to save Daniel, but could not! These two aspects of the subject will reprove a tendency which sometimes arises to think that one system of government would be safer or better for the Christian than another. Scripture likens all Gentile governments to wild beasts; one is not much better than another, and in the two cases before us, both were powerless for either good or ill. Members of the One Body can find no warrant in Scripture for concluding that they will not be called upon to suffer, to endure, and, if needs be, to die for the truth. When the time of trouble arrives, they will fare no better and no worse under one system of government than under another — in God’s hand alone will be the deciding factor, and blessed will be all those who can say, ‘But if not ... we will not’ (Dan. 3:18).

**Idolatry**

The presence and continuance of idolatry to the very end is a matter of solemn concern to all children of God. Although in the present series the subject only arises naturally out of the threefold conflict with those who would impose idol worship upon the captive Hebrews, we dare not, in view of the depth and scope of the truth involved, try to compress reference to the subject into a
closing paragraph. We shall, however, be brought face to face with it when we consider, as a counterpart of these three passages dealing with idolatry, the three decrees published by the idolatrous kings in which they speak of the God of Israel, and we can then devote a little more space to its consideration.
CHAPTER 2

The God of Heaven

The series of confessions by the rulers of the people, recorded in this book, shows a growing acknowledgment, on their part, of the one true God. The first of these is recounted in chapter 2:46,47, after Daniel had interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. It is not a clear testimony, and is mixed with idolatrous practices, but it marks a step in the direction of light and truth:

"Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odours unto him. The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a GOD OF GODS, AND A LORD OF KINGS, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret" (Dan. 2:46,47).

The three decrees

Chapter 2 records Nebuchadnezzar’s own action and confession. They were not of a very deep nature: they were not accompanied by any change of heart or life, nor did they cause Nebuchadnezzar to refrain from idolatry. Chapter 3 records the setting up of the golden image and the attempt upon the lives of the three captives. As a result of God’s intervention on their behalf, Nebuchadnezzar published a decree in the following terms:

"Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort" (Dan. 3:29).

In addition to this public decree we have the private confession of Nebuchadnezzar himself:

"Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, Who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and have changed the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God" (Dan. 3:28).
This is an advance on the confession of chapter 2. In it Nebuchadnezzar himself blesses God, and prohibits, under severe penalties, any word against Him. But it is in chapter 4 that we get the fullest and most complete recognition of God.

The whole of this chapter is the proclamation of king Nebuchadnezzar. When one has waded through a series of royal proclamations made by kings of Assyria, Babylon or Egypt, full of idolatry, cruelty, and human pride, this proclamation of so mighty a king is seen to be all the more remarkable. It is the one solitary contribution to Holy Scripture made by a Gentile king. In thus becoming a contributor to these holy writings, Nebuchadnezzar must be allowed a place with David, Solomon and Hezekiah. The careful student will, moreover, realize that, in its limited compass, Daniel 4 accomplishes for Nebuchadnezzar what Ecclesiastes does for Solomon who as we know had lapsed into idolatry and worldliness.

Daniel 4 is a long passage to quote in full at this time, yet its value and unique character almost justify our doing so. We refrain, however, and give only the opening and closing sections, trusting that any reader not fully acquainted with the passage will read it throughout before proceeding further:

"NEBUCHADNEZZAR the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the High God hath wrought toward me. How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation".

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"And at the end of the days I NEBUCHADNEZZAR lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever. Whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou".
THE GOD OF HEAVEN

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'Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all Whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase' (Dan. 4:1-3; 4:34,35; 4:37).

What a testimony was this to be published throughout the domain of this great king. Here is recognition of the greatness of the heavenly King and kingdom, and, more than that, the light of moral truth breaks in and God is praised not merely in view of His power, but because all His works are truth, and His ways judgment, His will supreme in heaven and among men.

How this revolution was accomplished occupies the bulk of Nebuchadnezzar’s proclamation, (Dan. 4:4-36). Summarizing the verses we find the king greatly disturbed by a dream, which none of the wise men of his realm can interpret. Daniel, however, is empowered to do so, and his interpretation reveals that angelic watchers had decreed that Nebuchadnezzar, because of his pride, should suffer a great humiliation. A disease, partly mental, and resembling what is known as lycanthropy, falls upon him in the height of his pride. He imagines that he is an ox, and is driven out into the fields where he suffers this shameful ignominy for 'seven times' with the avowed object:

'... until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will ... Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule' (Dan. 4:32,26).

The mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens

Daniel, in this passage, unfolds one of the mysteries ('secret' in 4:9 is translated 'mysteries' in the LXX.). Following His rejection by Israel, in Matthew 13, the Lord reveals a series of mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, which includes a fuller development of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream of the great tree. Let the reader compare the vision of the great tree, which gave lodging-place to the fowls of
the heaven, with the parable of the Mustard Seed. Daniel 4 confines itself to Nebuchadnezzar's aspect of the question, while Matthew 13 traces the transition from the small seed (Israel's kingdom) to the great tree that supported the types of Satanic agency, the fowls of the heaven (Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom). In face of the clear testimony of Daniel 4 it is inexcusable on the part of expositors to try to drag the church into the parables of the kingdom of the heavens. Nebuchadnezzar could have put right most Christian writers in the interpretation of this well-known, but much misunderstood, chapter of Matthew.

There is one more royal proclamation in this book: it occurs at the end of chapter 6. Just as the deliverance of Shadrach and his companions moved Nebuchadnezzar to make a proclamation throughout the realm, so also the deliverance of Daniel from the lions, moved Darius to make a proclamation:

"Then king Darius wrote unto all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, Who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions" (Dan. 6:25-27).

To this testimony we ought to add that of Cyrus, as recorded in Ezra 1:2,3:

"Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah ... He is the God ...".

Out of the mouths of kings who were Gentiles by nature, and idolaters by practice, the Lord brought this testimony to Himself:

'A God of gods, and a Lord of kings'.
'A Revealer of secrets'.
'A God Who can deliver His servants'.
'The Most High God, that liveth for ever'.
'The King of heaven'.
'The living God, and One Who works signs and wonders in heaven and earth'.
'Whose will is done in the army of heaven'.
'Who setteth up kings and putteth them down'.
'Whose dominion and kingdom is everlasting'.

Yet the men who made these public testimonies had doubtless uttered many a prayer like the following portion of a hymn to the Moon God:

'In heaven who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme! On earth who is supreme? Thou alone art supreme!
'As for thee thy word is proclaimed in heaven, and the angels bow down their faces'.

***

'O Lord, in heaven is thy Lordship, on earth is thy dominion'.

The father of Belshazzar has left on record a prayer to the Moon God, opening with these words:

'O Sin (i.e., the Moon God), thou lord of the gods, thou king of the gods of heaven and earth, and the god of the gods, who dwellest in heaven'.

In the decrees and proclamations of Nebuchadnezzar we can, at length, see these ascriptions of praise and honour transferred from false gods and rendered to the Living God. If his successors did not profit by his example, we have every reason to believe that Nebuchadnezzar, the first head of Gentile dominion, is numbered among the redeemed.

It is evident from the record of Daniel that there is a very definite recognition of idolatry as being deeply rooted in the affairs of man. We find this not only in the beginning of Israel’s national existence, but in the very genesis of the human race itself. What was the bait used in the garden of Eden? 'Ye shall be as gods (or as God) knowing good and evil' (Gen. 3:5). When God would deliver Israel from Egypt, He dealt not only with Pharaoh and the Egyptians, but directed His plagues and judgments
‘against all the gods of Egypt’ (Exod. 12:12). The Nile, the frogs, the flies, the ashes, and the locusts that figure in the plagues had definite reference to Egyptian idolatry.

At the very beginning of the great covenant which God made at Sinai, stands the commandment: ‘Thou shalt have no other gods before Me’ (Exod. 20:3). It was by an act of idolatry that Israel caused the tables of stone to be broken by Moses (Exod. 32:19). At least thirty false gods are named in Scripture, such as Dagon, Bel, Diana, Rimmon, &c.

Idolatry was prevalent throughout the world at the time of Christ and the apostles. Acts 14, 17 and 19 give three diverse examples of the idolatry of the times, to which must be added sorcery (Acts 8:9-11; 13:6-8; 19:13-20), and divination (Acts 16:16-18). In confirmation of this statement let us take Paul’s epistles. It might be thought that in setting out the gospel of grace, the nature and object of faith and hope, the regulation of church discipline and ministry, idolatry, as such, would not need to be mentioned. Yet what do we find? Romans 1:18-23 reveals the close connection between Gentile reprobation and idolatry, which is only overcome by the glorious reconciliation which Paul preached. Galatians 4:8 alludes to the bondage of idolatry and shows the astonishing fact that when a believer draws back from the glorious liberty of the gospel to the servitude of the law, he is really acting in the spirit of idolatry. In Galatians 5:20, idolatry is included in the list of the works of the flesh.

1 Corinthians devotes more than one passage to the question of idolatry (8, 10, and 12). 2 Corinthians 6:16 asks, What agreement hath the temple of God with idols? 1 Thessalonians 1 speaks of the repentant Thessalonians as, ‘turning to God from idols’. And 2 Thessalonians 2 reveals the goal of all idolatry, ‘the man of sin’. John in his first epistle does not hesitate to say: ‘My little children, keep yourselves from idols’ (1 John 5:21). Peter warns against ‘banquetings, and abominable idolatries’ (1 Pet. 4:3), while the Revelation shows that, at the time of the
end, idolatry with all its obscenity and demonism will be again dominant in the earth (Rev. 2:14-20; 9:20; 21:8; 22:15). In Ephesians 5:5 the covetous man is said to be an idolater, and in Colossians 3:5 covetousness is said to be idolatry.

While, therefore, in this land, actual and literal idolatry may not be so evident, the spirit of idolatry as revealed in the pride, vain wisdom and thanklessness of Romans 1:20-23, in the legalizing of the gospel as shown in Galatians 4, and the magnifying of self as contained in the word covetousness, and revealed in the prophetic utterance, ‘lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God’, shows that it would be a simple process of devolution to bring back idolatry in all its hideousness, even upon a so-called civilized community.

Revelation 13 reveals that Nebuchadnezzar’s attempt as recorded in Daniel 2 will be repeated, and, blessed be God, Revelation 15:2 reveals that there will, once again, be the Shadrachs, Meshachs, and Abed-negos, who will not bow the knee to this image of Baal.

It is only necessary to visit a country fair, or a world-famous exhibition, to see the booths occupied by the palmist, the fortune-teller and the like. One has only to question the motorist, the professional actor, and others, to learn how much trust is placed in lucky mascots, charms, &c. At intervals the newspaper records the objection of someone to the allotment of the number thirteen to his house or place at table and the like, for superstition is by no means dead. Then, further, the rapid strides that spiritism is making, the holding of seances, by the thousand, in this land and others, the prevalent idolatry still openly practised in India and other lands, all show the deep-rooted nature of this systematic perversion of truth. All idolatry usurps the place of Christ. He, and He alone, is the true image of God. No man can worship God unassisted, for He is Spirit, and can be neither seen, heard nor conceived by man. But God has come down to us in the person of Christ, and idolatry, the worship of any
other than our Lord Jesus Christ, is the devil’s great anti-Christian attack. There can be little doubt that idolatry sprang into being, full-fledged, at Babel, and from that source can be traced the chief idolatrous practices of the whole earth. The controversy over the Prayer Book in the Church of England is largely centred around the Lord’s Supper, which some would approximate to the blasphemous fable of the Mass, which, again, involves idolatry.

Idolatry, therefore, touches the person and work of the Son of God; in its mystery of iniquity, which culminates in a man claiming divine worship, it travesties the mystery of godliness, ‘God was manifested in the flesh’. We have said that we could go back to the beginning of Israel’s national history and to the beginning of the history of the human race, and find idolatry — but the full truth is that we can go back until revelation ceases, and there learn that before man was created, idolatry was already the first great sin in the universe of God (see Ezek. 28:1-19), and from it, and because of it, springs every other form of evil. Conversely, it is equally true that acceptable worship (translated ‘godliness’ in 1 Timothy), lies at the root of all righteousness, goodness and truth, for no man can be either righteous, good, or true, who is in error concerning God Himself.

Let us keep ourselves from idols — covetousness, selfishness, and legalism on the one hand, and any approach to outward symbols such as charms, mascots or superstitious practices. If we must believe that some things are ‘lucky’, let us take Wycliffe’s translation of Genesis 39:2: ‘And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a luckie fellow’.

**Babylon weighed and found wanting**

We have looked at the witness maintained against idolatry in Daniel 1, 3 and 6, and also the witness for the living God in Daniel 2, 4, and 6. There remains but one
more historic feature to be considered before we pass on to prophecy itself, and that is the handwriting on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. Here, then, may be a fit place to show the relationship which exists between the historic and prophetic sections. Nothing is recorded in the historic portion that does not anticipate the future prophecy. This may be illustrated by turning for a moment to a companion prophecy, that of Isaiah. In the midst of the prophecy, and standing in literal correspondence, will be found two historic sections, Isaiah 7 to 12, Ahaz, and Isaiah 36 to 39, Hezekiah.

Events in the life of Ahaz enshrine the great Messianic foreshadowings of Isaiah 7:14 and 9:7, while episodes in the history of Hezekiah take their place in the prophecy, foreshadowing, in Sennacherib, the anti-Christ, and giving, in his doom, an assurance of Jerusalem's final deliverance.

So is it in Daniel. History foreshadows prophecy. The golden image and the furnace of fire find their antitype in Revelation 13. We can see this relation of historic type to prophetic reality in the following simple outline:

Daniel as a whole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The historic type.</th>
<th>The prophetic reality.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reign of Nebuchadnezzar foreshadows the duration and character of Gentile dominion (Dan. 1 to 4).</td>
<td>During Belshazzar's reign — end of Gentile dominion and the setting up of the kingdom of the Lord (Dan. 7 and 8).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reign of Belshazzar foreshadows the doom of Gentile dominion (Dan. 5).</td>
<td>During Darius' reign — end of desolations and the final restoration of Israel (Dan. 9).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reign of Darius foreshadows the last days (Dan. 6).</td>
<td>During reign of Cyrus (Darius being a title of Cyrus) — the time of the end more clearly detailed (Dan. 10 to 12).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This will suffice for our present study; a fuller structure indicating the complete interrelation of the parts of the book will be found on page 44, when the strictly prophetic section is opened.
Chapter 2

The writing on the Wall

‘O sin (i.e. the moon god), thou lord of the gods, thou king of the
gods of heaven and earth ... in the heart of Belshazzar, my first-
born son, the off-spring of my loins, set the fear of thine exalted
godhead, so that he may commit no sin and that he may be satisfied
with the fulness of life’.

This prayer of Nabonidus was all in vain, for, offered as
it was to a god who could neither hear nor see, Belshazzar
found in his service no spiritual strength. It is pathetic to
read the petition that Belshazzar may be satisfied with the
fulness of life, when, as a fact, like the wicked, he did not
live out half his days.

In Daniel 5:2 Nebuchadnezzar is called his ‘father’, and
the critics have not failed to make capital out of this. Their
efforts, however, reflect upon their own intelligence rather
than Daniel’s veracity, for as there is no equivalent in either Chaldee or Hebrew for our English word
‘grandfather’, and, as even the little instructed reader
knows, the Hebrew idiom uses the word ‘father’ for
‘ancestor’, these critics should first of all tell us what other
word Daniel could have used. We know that Daniel
had access to Jeremiah’s prophecy, to say nothing of
his personal knowledge of the exact relationship that
Belshazzar bore to Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah 27:7
says of Nebuchadnezzar: ‘All nations shall serve him
(Nebuchadnezzar), and his son (Nabonidus, who offered
the prayer cited above), and his son’s son (Belshazzar),
until the very time of his land come’.

The banqueting hall in which Belshazzar held his
iniquitous feast has been discovered. It is 60 feet wide by
172 feet long, with beautifully decorated walls. Here this
last of Babylon’s kings made a great feast. Away on a
military expedition against Cyrus, his father, Nabonidus,
had left his son as co-regent, but instead of looking after
the defences of the city he planned this great carousel. We
read that he ‘drank wine before the thousand’, and this
apparently worked upon his vanity and innate wickedness,
so that ‘while he tasted the wine, he commanded to
bring the golden and silver vessels which his father, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein' (Dan. 5:2). This was done, and the name of the great Jehovah was condemned, as they praised the gods of gold, and of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone, but 'in the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace' (Dan. 5:5).

This emphasizes the fact that the life of the last king of Babylon ends in a blasphemous act, an historic foreshadowing of what is foretold in later chapters:

'And he shall speak great words against the most High' (Dan. 7:25).

'He magnified himself even to the prince of the host' (Dan. 8:11).

'He ... shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods' (Dan. 11:36).

'And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies' (Rev. 13:5).

Goliath, it will be remembered, defied the armies of the living God, and the God of those armies (1 Sam. 17:10 and 45), and David slew him with a small smooth stone. Sennacherib 'blasphemed' and 'reproached the living God' (Isa. 37:4 and 23), and the angel of the Lord smote the camp of the Assyrians, Sennacherib himself perishing at the hand of his sons. So will it be at the end when the last great blasphemer occupies the throne.

The mysterious message written on the wall filled the king with deadly fear. He cried aloud for the Chaldeans and soothsayers, offering the highest place in the realm to any who could show the meaning of the mystic words. But none was able to interpret the message of doom. At this juncture 'the queen' came into the banqueting house. Evidently she had not associated herself with the impious carousel, and she it was who remembered Daniel. Daniel, with true spiritual nobility, tells the king to give his
rewards where he will, but says that he will interpret the writing.

Before doing so, Daniel rehearses the story of Nebuchadnezzar's pride and humbling: 'till he knew that the most high God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that He appointeth over it whomsoever He will' (Dan. 5:21). Belshazzar's sin was against light and knowledge: 'And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in Whose hand thy breath is, and Whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified' (Dan. 5:22, 23).

Belshazzar not only stands condemned as an individual, but he is, in turn, a type both of the last Babylonian ruler and of the Gentile world. Look at the parallels that there are between the indictment of Belshazzar by Daniel, and the indictment of the Gentile world by Paul:

**Daniel 5:22-28**

'Thou knewest all this'.

'Hast thou not glorified'.

'Gods of silver and gold, ... which neither see, hear or know'.

'Thou hast not humbled thine heart'.

'The Lord God of heaven'.

'Numbered, weighed, divided'.

**Romans 1:21-26**

'When they knew God'.

'They glorified Him not as God'.

'An image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things'.

'Their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools'.

'His eternal power and Godhead'.

'God also gave them up'.


The words written on the wall were in the ordinary Chaldaic language. It was not therefore their literal meaning but their significance that baffled the king and his wise men.

Mene.— The word occurs in Daniel 2:24,49 and 3:12 where it is translated ‘ordained’ and ‘set’ and in Daniel 1:5,10 and 11 ‘appoint’ and ‘set’. It is possible that Belshazzar and his wise men, when they looked at the word Mene, could associate it with none other than the god of that name, which meant the god of destiny, and is written Manu on the Assyrian inscriptions. Isaiah 65:11,12 says: ‘But ye are they that forsake the LORD ... and that furnish the drink offering unto Meni (see margin). Therefore will I number (Heb. manithi) you to the sword’. Here we have a paronomasia on the two words Meni and manithi, similar to Daniel 5 where a double reference may have been intended. There was a ‘wonderful Numberer’ (Palmoni) (Dan. 8:13), of Whom the god Meni was but a pagan shadow, Who indeed had numbered the days of Belshazzar: ‘God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it’ (Dan. 5:26).

Tekel.— is the Chaldee equivalent of the Hebrew shakal, to weigh, from which comes shekel, a weight. With the prefix ‘m’ the word becomes mishkolet ‘the plummet’ as in Isaiah 28:17: ‘Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet’. ‘Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting’ (Dan. 5:27).

Peres.— Many readers of the English Version are somewhat puzzled when they come to this third word. The actual writing on the wall being upharsin, how is it that Daniel says peres? The answer is simple. The actual words translated as they stand are ‘Numbered, numbered, weighed, and divided’. ‘And’ is represented by the letter ‘u’, and this letter coming before the letter ‘p’ softens it, making it for the time being ‘ph’. The letters in are merely an ending, equivalent, so far as our language can afford a parallel, to ‘en’, as in broken, or ‘ing’ as in dividing. Now
no one would look in the dictionary for the word ‘and divided’ the ‘and’ would naturally be omitted. Again, it is usual to look for the infinitive, ‘to divide’, rather than, for instance, ‘dividing’ or ‘divided’. This is what Daniel did. He omitted the vav, ‘and’, let the ‘ph’ go back to ‘p’ omitted the ending ‘in’ and took the true word peres.

Just as we saw in Isaiah 65:11,12 that meni, as well as being a verb, was a proper noun, so we find peres not only means ‘divided’, but is the name for ‘Persian’, the word thereby revealing by whom the kingdom was to be divided or taken. A parallel might be put in these terms, ‘You will be scotched’, thus conveying the idea that a Scot would do the scotching. Similarly, play could be made upon the names China, Japan, Greece, Turkey, etc. So it was that Daniel who, it must be remembered, was interpreting, not merely repeating, the words written, took the word peres in its double significance:

‘Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians’ (Dan. 5:28).

‘In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old’ (Dan. 5:30,31).

Just as Belshazzar was co-regent with his father, so Cyrus, the son of Darius, was acting in a like capacity. His general, Gobryas, took Babylon in the name of Cyrus, who was then about 40 years of age (see Herodotus). Isaiah and Jeremiah had prophesied:

‘Thus saith the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have helden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings (see Dan. 5:6 "the joints of his loins were loosed"), to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut’ (Isa. 45:1).

‘The LORD hath raised up the spirit of the kings of the Medes: for His device is against Babylon, to destroy it; because it is the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of His temple’ (Jer. 51:11) (see Dan. 5:2-4).

‘The mighty men of Babylon have forborne to fight, they have remained in their holds ... one post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon that his city is taken at one (or each) end’ (Jer. 51:30,31).
Herodotus tells us that the Babylonians retired to the city. Cyrus, having diverted the waters of the Euphrates, entered the city by the bed of the river at each end (see The Companion Bible note to Jer. 51:31, p. 1093). A tablet is in existence on which is recorded the words: ‘On the sixteenth day of Tammuz, Gobryas, governor of the land of Gutium, and the army of Cyrus, without fighting, to Babylon descended’. 

God is the God of heaven. He ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will. We may not always see the hand of the Lord, but He has never vacated His throne nor ceased to guide and overrule in order that all His purpose may be accomplished.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. 2)

Having acquainted ourselves with some of the outstanding features of the first half of the book of Daniel, and having observed that the historic section foreshadows the greater prophetic portion, we now turn our attention to the prophecies themselves, and commence with the vision of Nebuchadnezzar which occupies chapter 2.

The Gentile character of this vision is indicated by the change of language that occurs at verse 4: ‘Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Syriack’. The words ‘in Syriack’ mark the place where Daniel ceases to write in Hebrew, and thenceforth to the end of chapter 7 employs the Syriack or Aramaic language.

Before going into detail it may be well to consider one or two interpretations that have been put forward, so that the way may be cleared and our study pursued unhindered.

1. Four kingdoms.— One school of interpretation speaks of the image as representing four kingdoms only—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. The legs represent the two divisions of the Roman Empire, the eastern and western, and the ten toes, the kingdoms into which it will finally be divided, thus making Rome's dominion either in its full power or in its divided form
cover the whole period from before Christ to the present time, and necessitating a revival of ancient Rome at the time of the end. Some who endorse this view believe Rome to be the Babylon of the Apocalypse, whilst others believe that literal Babylon will be rebuilt.

2. The fourth kingdom regarded as Satanic.— Another view of the purport of the vision does not include Rome at all. The view is that Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece followed one another, but that by the time the Lord was here upon earth, the devil could claim that the kingdoms of the world had been delivered unto him (Luke 4:6). Moreover, another objection to Rome having a place in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision is said to be the fact that she never really had possession of Babylon itself. We would add, however, that this is not strictly true.

These two points of view are maintained with some recognition of the principles of prophetic interpretation. There are other views, but they are too far removed from the way of truth to justify space for consideration here.

We do not propose analysing the two methods of interpretation mentioned above, but shall proceed at once to definite exposition, and where such exposition causes us to depart from the views expressed in these interpretations we shall make any necessary criticism. All that we would say here is that we do not believe either to be correct.

The latter days

To quote the verses that record both the vision and the interpretation would occupy more space than we can afford, but we trust that no reader will be satisfied to read these notes without personal reference to the Scriptures themselves.

From the urgency with which he demanded the interpretation, and the extreme measures he adopted to punish inability to comply with that demand, it is clear that Nebuchadnezzar considered the vision to be of supreme importance. It is blessed to see Daniel and his friends
confidently laying the matter before 'the God of heaven', and to read the gracious answer given.

After a passing reference to the utter failure of the wise men of Babylon to help the king, Daniel said:

'But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days' (Dan. 2:28).

Evidently the king himself had been seriously thinking about the future of the dominion committed to him, for Daniel continues:

'As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter' (Dan. 2:29).

Now while, in one sense, the succession of Medo-Persia to the dominion was something that should come to pass 'hereafter', as also was that of Greece, these successive monarchies are, nevertheless, not in mind, except as steps leading to the goal. In 2:45 Daniel becomes more explicit:

'Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter' (Dan. 2:45).

'The latter days' and 'hereafter' have particular reference to 'the days of these kings' of verse 44, when the stone shatters the image and the kingdom of the Lord is set up.

When we come to study chapter 7 we shall find the same concentration on the 'end' and a rapid passing over of the steps leading to that end, as witness the words: 'I would know the truth of the fourth beast' (Dan. 7:19).

The student should be informed as to the occurrences of these expressions, 'latter days' and 'hereafter' in the book of Daniel, and we therefore give them:

**Hereafter**

'What should come to pass hereafter' (Dan. 2:29).
'What shall come to pass hereafter' (Dan. 2:45)
'Another shall rise after them' (Dan. 7:24).
Chapter 2

Latter days

‘What shall be in the latter days’ (Dan. 2:28).
‘What shall be in the last end of the indignation’ (Dan. 8:19).
‘In the latter time of their kingdom’ (Dan. 8:23).
‘What shall befall thy people in the latter days’ (Dan. 10:14).
‘What shall be the end of these things?’ (Dan. 12:8).

Daniel stood at the end of a long line of prophets, and the expressions ‘latter days’ and ‘last days’ had a very clear meaning. (See Gen. 49:1, Num. 24:14, Deut. 4:30; 8:16; 31:29; 32:20,29, Isa. 2:2, Micah 4:1, and other passages).

Gentile dominion

The succeeding kingdoms symbolized in the great image of Daniel 2 show a marked depreciation. Gold gives place to silver, silver to brass (or copper), brass to iron, iron to clay. Because we are far more likely to have handled a solid piece of lead than a bar of gold, many of us would place lead as the heaviest of metals. This, however, would be inaccurate, the specific gravity of lead being 11.4, whereas that of gold is as high as 19.3. Gold is the heaviest metal mentioned in Daniel 2, and it is of that metal that the head is constructed, so that the image of Gentile dominion is top-heavy from the commencement. This can be seen by observing the relative specific gravity of each material:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Specific Gravity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass</td>
<td>8.5 (Copper 8.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The arrangement of these metals in the structure of the image indicates depreciation not only in weight, but also in the characteristics of the kingdom. The kingdom of which Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold was an absolute monarchy. Of him it could be said, ‘Whom he would he
slew, and whom he would he kept alive’. The Medo-Persian kingdom, represented by silver, was not absolute, as was Nebuchadnezzar’s. Darius was limited by the presidents and princes, and by his own laws ‘that could not be broken’. The Grecian kingdom of brass was a military kingdom, and consequently lower still in the scale. We will not here speak of Rome, as we have not yet dealt with the question of the fourth kingdom. We see enough, however, to realize that this prophetic image prevents us from ever believing that the kingdom of heaven will come upon earth as a result of Gentile rule; rather are we clearly told that Gentile rule must be ground to powder before the kingdom of the Lord can be set up.

Principles of interpretation

Let us now seek the key to the understanding of the unexplained portions of the image. First we will examine what is clearly revealed. Babylon was succeeded by Medo-Persia, Medo-Persia by Greece, and Greece by some kingdom unnamed. Babylon passed off the scene, but the kingdom of Persia has remained to this day, and so has Greece. This leads us to our first point. It is not a necessity that the dispossessed kingdom should be either destroyed or absorbed by its successor, and therefore the idea that Rome is still existing in a weakened condition, and that the ten kings at the end must be found in the Roman earth is, on this ground, without foundation. Some other principle is at work and must be discovered.

We showed on page 8, that the ‘Times of the Gentiles’, were characterized by one essential feature, indicated by the Lord in Luke 21:24: ‘And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled’. Here is the essential prophetic character of the times of the Gentiles. Babylon dominated Jerusalem, and every power that has succeeded to the control of Jerusalem has taken its place in the image of Daniel 2. Does Rome take its place according to this canon of interpretation? Who was it that sent out a decree that all the inhabited
earth should be taxed, and so unwittingly compelled the birth of the Lord Jesus to take place at Bethlehem? It was Caesar Augustus (Luke 2:1). Who was exercising dominion over Jerusalem when John the Baptist pointed out the Messiah of Israel? The answer is Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1). Who was Governor of Jerusalem, with the power of life and death, when the Lord Jesus was crucified? Again, it was a Roman, Pontius Pilate (Luke 23). To whom did the Jewish nation pay tribute at this time? To none but Caesar (Luke 23:2). It is, then, very evident that the Roman Empire is in the line of Gentile succession, and if historians are true and Rome’s sovereignty over the earth lasted for the space of 666 years, we may, in its typical character, find food for further thought.

This brings us to another important point. Believers in the Word of God are as certain that God knew the rise and fall of Rome as that He knew the rise and fall of Babylon or Persia. Why did He not definitely name Rome as He had Persia and Greece? For the selfsame reason that, in Old Testament prophecy, He veiled the rejection of Christ by Israel, the ensuing long interval between the ‘suffering’ and the ‘glory’, and the ‘times and the seasons’ of Israel’s restoration.

The principle is brought out in Matthew 11:14, ‘If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come’. Now John the Baptist declared most emphatically that he was not Elias (John 1:21). The Lord declared that Elias must first come and restore all things, as Malachi had already prophesied (Matt. 17:11; Mal. 4:5,6), and that this should herald the great and dreadful day of the Lord. At the birth of John the Baptist it was said of him that he should go before the Lord ‘in the spirit and power of Elias’ (Luke 1:17). If Israel had received the King and the kingdom, then Rome would have rapidly developed into the beast, and Herod was already at hand, a potential antichrist (see Acts 12:20-23). We are not, however, called upon to discuss what might have been, for that leaves God out of
the question. What actually took place was foreknown and provided for: Israel rejected their King and postponed their own restoration. In consequence of their folly a dispensation of hitherto unrevealed grace to an election from among the Gentiles was instituted and no dominating power in the line of Gentile dominion is revealed which would cover this period. Indeed, such would conflict with the fact that, while Israel are not reckoned as God’s people, the prophetic calendar is unchecked and the prophetic voice silent. Nebuchadnezzar’s vision, however, spans the whole period from his own accession until the coming of the Lord; and Rome, by its manifest sovereignty over Jerusalem, falls into line with the other powers. Rome’s dominion over Jerusalem, however, has not lasted throughout this long period. What power succeeded Rome in its hold upon Jerusalem? We know that at the time of the Crusades, in which one of our own kings, Richard I., took part, the city of Jerusalem was held by the Mohammedan power, and so, though unnamed, that power succeeds Rome in the line of Gentile dominion.

It has been objected that the Mohammedan power was never a ‘kingdom’ in the same sense as were Babylon, Persia or Greece. This is so, but instead of that fact being against its inclusion, it is rather in favour of it, because from the time of Israel’s rejection, and the revelation of the dispensation of the mystery, the image of Daniel enters a protracted period of indefinite length and character, and not until the time of the end does the image emerge with any precision. The same features characterize Gentile dominion at the present moment. The next development will be tragic in its reality.

Does the Mohammedan power still dominate Jerusalem? No, another change has taken place in our own days. When General Allenby received the keys of Jerusalem on 9th December, 1917, the dominion passed from the Mohammedan power to the present Gentile domination of Jerusalem, the British mandate under the League of Nations.
Let us now see what these events mean, and how far they coincide with the prophetic interpretation of the course of Gentile dominion given by Daniel:

1 Head of gold........BAKONYN (Dan. 2).
2 Breast of silver.......MEDO-PERSIA (Dan. 5:31).
3 Belly and thighs
   of brass...........GREECE (Dan. 8:21).
4 Legs of iron..........ROME (Luke 2).
5 Feet of iron and clay...TURKEY
   (A.D. 636 to 1917).
   ‘Five are fallen’
   (Rev. 17:10).

This line indicates the present moment.

6 Toes of clay...........THE TEN KINGS.
7 The stone cut out
   without hands.
   ‘One is’
   (Rev. 17:10).

Here we have the whole Gentile dominion represented as being sixfold, stamped with the number of man and the beast. We stand today at the junction of the feet and the ten toes, which are ten kings, and which, presumably, will come out of the League of Nations. When John wrote the book of the Revelation he was ‘in spirit’ writing from the Day of the Lord; consequently he could say, ‘Five are fallen’, namely, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome and Turkey, and ‘One is’, viz., the dominion of the ten kings. The true seventh is the kingdom of the Lord, but antichrist will present himself as the seventh — ‘The other is not yet come’; ‘he is of the seven and goeth into perdition’.

Much that is mysterious in these verses is to be understood only in the light of the fact that at the time of the end the human merges into the superhuman and Satanic. Although we have already occupied considerable space, the solemnity of the subject and need for clearness forbids undue brevity, and we shall therefore continue for a little further.
The ten toes of the image

The word ‘broken’ in Daniel 2:42 should be ‘brittle’, and shows that the ‘clay’ is pottery. Pottery of sufficient thickness would stand the weight of the image, but would shiver to pieces at a blow. It is impossible to fuse iron and pottery together in the same way that two metals may be fused, yet when we reach the feet of the Gentile image, metal gives place to pottery. Some radical change is here indicated. The feet are composed of both iron and clay:

‘But they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay’ (Dan. 2:43).

This does not mean that the communist will not mingle with the monarchist or the democrat with the autocrat, for this same verse in Daniel 2 contains a deeper explanation:

‘... they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another’ (Dan. 2:43).

‘The seed of men’.— Are not communists and kings the seed of men? Are democrats only the seed of men and the ruling classes not? To ask the question is to answer it. Gold is a metal superior to silver, but of like nature. So also silver is superior to brass, brass to iron, yet all are metals. But at the feet of the image the altogether different materials used indicate that the ‘they’ of Daniel 2:43 and ‘the seed of men’ are beings of two different orders.

Now the Lord revealed that at the time of the end it should be as it was in the days of Noah. Genesis 6 contains enough to enable us to see in the clay feet of the image the revival of the seed of the wicked one. There are two seeds in view, and the book of the Revelation makes it clear that at the end, demonic possessed rulers under the Satanic beast and antichrist will have full, though brief, sway.

In Daniel 2:44 the prophet says: ‘In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom’. In the days of what kings? Are they Nebuchadnezzar, Darius, or Alexander? Any one of the three is historically
impossible. What kings reign at the time when the kingdom of the Lord is set up? We find from Daniel that ten kings shall arise at the time of the end:

‘And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings’ (Dan. 7:24).

We read also, in Revelation 17:12:

‘The ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast’.

The ten horns of the beast and the ten toes of the image speak of the same ten kings:

‘And as the toes of the feet ... in the days of these kings’ (Dan. 2:42-44).

We have said nothing of the seventh feature, the stone cut out without hands. This foreshadows the kingdom of the Lord, and as the subject comes into view later on in Daniel, we shall be better able to deal with it then. Meanwhile let us be thankful for the sure word of prophecy. As members of the body of Christ with a calling, hope and inheritance ‘far above all’, these things only remotely touch us. They belong, however, to the Christ we delight to honour, and, though far removed from the scene of His earthly triumphs, we can, with full heart, pray: ‘Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven’.

The diagram opposite may help the reader to visualize the prophetic import of the Image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.
NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM (Dan. 2)

B.C.

496

446

400

300

200

100

HEAD OF GOLD
BABYLONIAN
EMPIRE

BREAST AND
ARMS OF SILVER
MEDO-
PERSIAN
EMPIRE

BELLY AND
THIGHS OF
BRASS

GREGIAN
EMPIRE

LEGGS OF
IRON

ROMAN
EMPIRE

THE PRESENT DISPENSATION OF
THE MYSTERY

TIME IS NOT RECKONED WHERE ISRAEL IS LO-AMMI

END OF
ROMAN EMPIRE 536

END OF
MOHAMMEDAN
EMPIRE 1917

FEET OF IRON AND CLAY
TEN KINGS

LION BEAR LEOPARD
REV XIII

OVERSE BEAST
HEADS TO HORNS LITTLE H

BEGINNING OF SORROW
FINAL WEEK

62 X 7 YEARS

434 YEARS

66 YEARS

430 YEARS

GOING NORTH
OF DECREW
434 B.C.
TO REBUILD
CITY
7,777 YEARS
66 YEARS
TEMPLE
DEDICATED

RAM
2 YEARS

HE GOAT
62 X 7

ACTS

PERIOD
JEWISH
HISTORY IN
SCRIPTURE
ENDS

LO-AMMI
PERIOD
LEADING
ON TO

END OF
MISIAM
626 YEARS

BATTLE OF
ACIUM
90

BIRTH OF
CHRIST 29

AD
CRUCIFIXION
29

ACTS
XXIII:13

TEMPLE
DESTROYED

THE PRESENT DISPENSATION OF
THE MYSTERY

TIME IS NOT RECKONED WHERE ISRAEL IS LO-AMMI

END OF
MOHAMMEDAN
EMPIRE 1917

FEET OF IRON AND CLAY
TEN KINGS

LION BEAR LEOPARD
REV XIII

OVERSE BEAST
HEADS TO HORNS LITTLE H
The vision of the great tree (Dan. 4)

Chapter 4 of Daniel is perhaps one of the most remarkable in the Bible, for it was not written by Daniel, but by or at the order of Nebuchadnezzar himself. That some mighty change was wrought in this king, going down and undermining the very depths of his faith in the gods of his fathers, will be evident if we place side by side an extract from the India House Inscription 606 B.C. (an ascription of praise by Nebuchadnezzar to one of his heathen gods) and an extract from Daniel 4:

India House Inscription

'To Merodach my lord I prayed and lifted up my hand. O Merodach first born of the gods, mighty prince who didst create me, and has entrusted to me the sovereignty over hosts of men; as my own precious life I do love the nobility of thy dignity. In all the in-habitable earth I have seen no city fairer than thy city Babylon ... I, the king, am thy adorer ... appointed a priest king to be the restorer of all thy cities. By thy command, O Merodach merciful one, may this temple which I have made endure for ever'.

Daniel 4:1-3, 30,31,37

'Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I thought it good to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me. How great are His signs! and how mighty are His wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation ... Is not this great Babylon, that I have built ... the kingdom is departed from thee ... Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase'.

For further details regarding this remarkable testimony and its related decrees in Daniel, the reader is referred to page 18.

We approach this fourth chapter in order to obtain its testimony to the theme of Daniel, the time of the end, and in order that its place in the general scheme of the book
may be discovered. We have already shown that the book is divided into two parts:

(1) Historic foreshadowings (Chapters 1 to 6),
(2) Prophetic fulfilments (Chapters 7 to 12).

It is now time that this twofold character should be more thoroughly exhibited. Not only will the discovery of the underlying structure bear eloquent testimony to the truth and unity of the book, but it will place in true correspondence and relationship the outstanding portions, thus enabling us to gather information and light from the simple, historic sections for the illumination of the more complex prophetic portions. Accordingly, we ask the reader’s careful attention to the structure (overleaf) of the book of Daniel as a whole, and would mention that this outline has not hitherto appeared in any other work on the prophecy.

It will be seen that the vision of Daniel 7, where the four beasts are described, and where dominion is given to the Messiah, is to be read as a sequel to the vision of Gentile dominion and its destruction at the time of the end. The fiery furnace heated by Nebuchadnezzar’s orders, and the ordeal of the faithful three, is reversed in the days to come. The fiery furnace shall destroy the beast, and no deliverance is revealed as there was for Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Nebuchadnezzar sees a form like unto a Son of God, which is interpreted later by the words, ‘God hath sent His angel’. Daniel, too, sees one like unto the Son of man, and ten thousand times ten thousand angelic ministers accompany that august enthronement. The ‘seven times’ of Nebuchadnezzar’s peculiar malady and madness find an echo in Israel’s seventy sevens, and in particular the last seven years of Daniel 9. We therefore draw attention to one or two features in the record of the king’s madness that may be of service in the understanding of its prophetic foreshadowing.
The Book of Daniel as a whole

Historic foreshadowing and prophetic fulfilment,

A 1 and 2. Dream interpreted.
   Gentile dominion.
   'The Lord gave'.

B 3. The fiery furnace.
   The form like unto a Son of God.
   Command to people, nations and languages.
   The dimensions of the image and number of instruments (six).

C 4. The seven times of Gentile madness.

D 5. The hand.
   The writing (kethab) explained.
   Belshazzar's doom.
   Darius the Mede took the kingdom.

   The den sealed (chatham).
   'He delivereth'.

A 7. Dream interpreted.
   The Lord's dominion.
   'There was given Him'.

B 7 and 8. The fiery stream and the burning flame.
   One like unto the Son of man.
   People, nations and languages serve Him.
   The four, and the two, beasts (six).

C 9. The seventy sevens of Israel's discipline,
   with special reference to the last seven years.

D 10:1 The hand.
   to Belteshazzar's (Daniel's) strength.
11:1. The Scriptures (kethab) explained.
   Darius the Mede — confirmed.

E 11:2 The earth like a den of lions.
   to The book sealed (chatham).
12:13. 'His people shall be delivered'.

Chapter 2
The record may be divided as follows:

1. The vision of the tree and its import.
2. The intervention of the watchers.
3. The band of iron and brass.
4. The seven times.

Let us briefly touch upon these headings.

1. *The vision of the tree and its import.*— The tree seen in the vision stood in the midst of the earth, an expression aptly fitting the world dominion given to Nebuchadnezzar. The tree ‘grew until its height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth’. A sinister meaning attaches to the words, ‘The fowls of heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof’. The language is too close to that of the parable of the mustard tree to be mistaken: this tree supported satanic agencies. Daniel makes it clear that Nebuchadnezzar himself was represented by the tree: ‘It is thou, O king’ (4:22).

2. *The intervention of the watchers.*— ‘A watcher and an holy one came down from heaven’ (4:13) is the description given by Nebuchadnezzar. The well-known figure of *hendiadys* will be recognized here; the force of the expression is: ‘a holy watcher’, with intentional stress on the word ‘holy’. Chapter 10 gives a glimpse of one of these holy watchers over the kingdoms of men, and the many references in the book of the Revelation to angelic mediation and agency give still further light.

3. *The band of iron and brass.*— This detail is peculiar. The cutting down of the tree is a figure easy to be understood. So also is the leaving of the stump of the roots. Both have their immediate fulfilment in the smiting and the restoration of the king. But why should brass and iron bands be mentioned? It will be remembered that the two kingdoms, represented by metals, that come at the end of the Gentile dominion symbolized by the great image, were Greece and Rome — brass and iron. The fourth beast in Daniel’s vision, described in 7:19, has teeth of iron and nails of brass. The feet of the heavenly visitant mentioned
in Daniel 10 are likened to polished brass, and the feet of the risen Lord, the great Priest-King, described in Revelation 1:15, are likened to fine brass.

The cutting down of the tree sets forth the overthrow of Babylon, the leaving of the stump in the earth sets forth the fact that Babylon will be revived. The bands of iron and brass indicate that this revival will be retarded until the part of the prophecy indicated by the feet of the image, becomes history. Instead of looking forward to a revival of the ancient Roman Empire, and assuming that the ten kings must necessarily conform to a tenfold partition of the Roman world, the teaching is that Babylon is to be revived at the time of the end.

This fact is repeated or suggested in more ways than one. When the stone strikes the feet of the image, it does not simply destroy the clay, but ‘then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces’ (2:35). This suggests that all the Gentile powers will be represented at the end. Again in chapter 8 Greece and Persia are seen in conflict and, while at first sight it appears to deal with Greece and Persia long since past, the words of 8:17, ‘for at the time of the end shall be the vision’, clearly teach that the true prophetic period is yet future: ‘In the latter time of their kingdom, when transgressors are come to the full’ (8:23). Further, the prophecy of Daniel 9 while it speaks of seventy sevens, nevertheless focuses attention upon the last seven years (9:24-27). So, once more, in chapter 10, the heavenly messenger declares that the revelation contained in chapters 11 and 12 are prophetic of ‘what shall befall thy people in the latter days’ when Persia and Greece again come upon the scene. Finally a comparison of Daniel 7 with Revelation 13 shows the fourth indescribable beast to be the great Satanic revival of Babel at the time of the end.

Coming back to Daniel 4, it may be contended that the judgment pronounced fell upon Nebuchadnezzar, in person, and that it was Nebuchadnezzar in person who was restored. This, of course, is true, but we have seen that the
historic happenings recorded in Daniel foreshadowed the future, and Nebuchadnezzar’s madness sets forth the character of Gentile dominion as God sees it, first, generally, over the whole course of its duration, and then, especially, at the intensely awful period covered by the final seven years.

(4) The seven times.— We learn from Daniel 11:13 that ‘times’ mean ‘years’. ‘After certain years’ reads, in the margin, ‘at the end of times, even years’. If the vision of Daniel 4 had referred only to Nebuchadnezzar, having no further significance, there would have been no reason for saying, ‘and let seven times pass over him’, for the words ‘seven years’ would have been simpler and sufficient. But if these seven years were, in their turn, prophetic, then the more cryptic term is justified, stimulating us, as it does, to closer enquiry.

There are some who teach from Leviticus 26:18 that the punishment of Israel will be ‘seven times’, and computing by the ‘day for a year’ theory we have the 2,520 days which make up seven years, symbolizing 2,520 years, which are supposed to be the extent of Israel’s punishment and of Gentile dominion. Taking Nebuchadnezzar’s reign as commencing 600 B.C., we arrive at A.D. 1917 as the time of the end. We have stated this view not because we endorse it, but in order that our readers may face it, and also that it may be manifest that we are aware of it. All such date fixing respecting the time of the end we resolutely avoid as being unscriptural, quite apart from the fact that it would take a wiser man than Solomon to prove that the date of this present year is actually A.D. 1931, or even to get within a few years of accuracy. We believe God has purposely confused the calendar. He who gave definite chronology from Adam to Christ has, of set purpose, given no more — let us abide by that. As the structure partly suggests, the cryptic seven times of Nebuchadnezzar’s madness finds its echo in the final seven years of Daniel 9.
A superficial reading of the words of the holy watchers in Daniel 4:17, ‘He setteth up over it the basest (lowest) of men’, is likely to lead to a wrong inference. We at first think of moral baseness, and conceive of the idea that Gentile dominion is rotten to the core. It may be that it is, but the lesson of Daniel 4:17 is a happier one. Sh’phal (Aramaic) and its Hebrew equivalent shaphal mean ‘to humble’, and ‘to be humbled’, and comes again in Daniel 4:37 where Nebuchadnezzar says, ‘And those that walk in pride he is able to abase’. To Belshazzar, Daniel used the same word when he recalled Nebuchadnezzar’s pride and fall:

‘But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne ... and thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this’ (Dan. 5:20-22).

This attitude towards the proud is characteristic of the Day of the Lord:

‘The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day’ (Isa. 2:11; see also Isa. 2:12,17; 5:15; 10:33; 13:11; 40:4).

Shephelah, the feminine form, is rendered ‘valley’, ‘vale’, ‘plain’, and to those who knew the association of the words ‘base’, ‘humble’ and ‘valley’, such utterances as Zechariah 4:6,7 would have fuller and richer meaning ‘Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain’. By pride fell the angels. By pride fell Babylon. The pride of Israel testified to their fall. God resisteth the proud, and it is part of His purpose to hide pride from men. Nebuchadnezzar appears to have learnt the lesson, but the Gentile powers will pursue their proud course until the blasphemy and arrogance of the beast brings Gentile power down before the wrath of God.
The four kings of the end (Dan. 7)

The vision of Daniel recorded in chapter 7 is written in Chaldee (Aramaic or Syriac) and so belongs to the Gentile portion of the prophecy. In the interpretation of the great image in Daniel 2, reference is made to 'the days of these kings' (2:44). What we are now to consider is a fuller explanation of the times and character of these kings. The setting up of the kingdom of the Lord, in Daniel 2, is symbolized by the stone becoming a great mountain and filling the earth. In Daniel 7 the prophet describes the investiture of the Son of man with sovereignty. In Daniel 2 the stone crushes the image to powder; in Daniel 7 the same court that invests the Son of man with dominion, consigns the beast to the burning flame. These parallels are very evident, but confusion is sometimes introduced by expositors by assuming that Daniel 7 and 2 are co-extensive. It has been taught that we have the same Gentile dominion, but from two points of view, that from man's point of view it appears as a resplendent image, but in God's view as a succession of wild beasts. This, however, is true only with reference to the final phase, as we hope to show presently.

Another fruitful source of confusion is the assumption that there are four, and only four, kingdoms set out in Daniel 2, and that Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, represented by the four metals, are again presented as the four beasts of Daniel's dream. The objection to this interpretation is that it is contrary to the actual facts of the vision. First we have shown that the colossus of Daniel 2 is sixfold; Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Turkey, and the League issuing in the ten kings. Further, the kingdoms of Daniel 2 succeed one another, whereas the kingdoms of Daniel 7 are contemporaneous, for in Daniel 7:12 the rest of the beasts, while losing their dominion, are granted a prolongation of their lives. This would be impossible of interpretation if these four beasts represented the four kingdoms extending over centuries and succeeding one another. While this is true, we must at the same time avoid
missing what has been called the 'germinant', as well as the 'terminant' fulfilment. For example, the ram and he goat of Daniel 8, while primarily referring to 'the last end of the indignation' (8:19) are nevertheless foreshadowed by the nearer history of Alexander the Great.

Historic foreshadowings

Surveying these four beasts as historic anticipations of future literal kings, where must we place them in relation to the kingdoms of Daniel 2? Some say that the first beast, which was like a lion, represents the first kingdom, Babylon, and the fourth indescribable monster, Rome. This, however, cannot be true, for it introduces contradiction into the narrative. Daniel saw this vision when Babylon's last king was in his first year; and Medo-Persia was at this time almost as great in extent as Babylon. Thus neither Babylon nor Medo-Persia could be included in 'four kings which shall arise' (7:17), for at the time of the prophecy they were all future. The first must therefore represent Greece, the second Rome, the third Turkey, and the fourth the Satanic monster together with the ten kings (for it bears ten horns, 7:24), which are found at the end and described in Revelation 13.

The relation of Daniel 2 with Daniel 7 can be set out thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daniel 2</th>
<th>Daniel 7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Head of gold.</td>
<td>BABYLON.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Breast of silver.</td>
<td>MEDO-PERSIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Belly &amp; thighs of brass.</td>
<td>GREECE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Legs of iron.</td>
<td>ROME.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) Feet of iron and clay.</td>
<td>TURKEY.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(6) Toes of iron and clay.</td>
<td>TEN KINGS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lion with wings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with three ribs in its mouth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leopard with wings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monster with ten horns.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is a fitness about these symbolic animals. Alexander in thirteen years conquered the world; he moved with great rapidity and could well be likened to a lion with wings. The complete description may not be true of Alexander, but will fully fit the king who is yet to arise. Rome was ponderous and slow. It was the great road-maker. It is sheer guesswork to attempt to interpret the meaning of the three ribs — they may stand for Babylon, Persia and Greece in the historic foreshadowing, but they await fulfilment in their own time, when the meaning will be obvious to all believers. The cruelty of the leopard may aptly symbolize the character of the Turkish power that succeeded Rome. We leave this conjecture with the reader for what it is worth, and pass on to consider the real and full interpretation of the vision. It is evident that the chief interest is focused upon the fourth beast.

Unto the end (7:26)

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns" (Dan. 7:7).

"The residue" is translated 'the rest' in verse 12, and refers in each case to the three beasts described in verses 4-6. The words 'before it' (verse 7) appear at first to indicate that the fourth beast succeeded the other three, but 'before' here means 'in front of' as in verses 10, 13 and 20:

"I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things" (Dan. 7:8).

The interpretation given to Daniel is the interpretation given to us, and we are not at liberty to attempt a fuller explanation than that given here:
‘These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth’ (Dan. 7:17).
‘The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth’ (Dan. 7:23).

If the fourth is to be reckoned as successive in any foreshadowing way, it will be seen, in the parallel set out above, that it falls into its place at the end:

‘Which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces’ (Dan. 7:23).

It will be remembered that in the great image of Daniel 2 the last kingdom was ‘diverse’, inasmuch as it was composed of clay, whereas the earlier kingdoms were of differing metals. So with the beast that corresponds with the clay period; it is diverse, and is not described as the others are.

There is a peculiarly involved repetition given that may help us to realize that the long, historic foreshadowing, and the brief, prophetic fulfilment are in view:

The fourth beast is said to be ‘diverse’ from the rest.
The little horn is said to be ‘diverse’ from the first.
The fourth beast destroys three kings.
The little horn subdues three kings.
The fourth beast has a mouth speaking great things.
The little horn speaks great words against the Most High.

The conclusion seems to be that the little horn represents a final concentration of the fourth beast. Now we shall discover from Revelation 13 that this fourth beast concentrates in itself the three that it devours. The three beasts devoured are described as a lion with eagle’s wings, a bear, and a leopard having four wings with four heads. The beast described in Revelation 13 is a composite creature, having some of the characteristics of the lion, bear and leopard:

‘And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion’ (Rev. 13:2).
'Having seven heads and ten horns' (Rev. 13:1).

Even the seven heads are to be found in Daniel 7; three of the beasts were single-headed, while one had four heads, making a total of seven. The mouth speaking blasphemy is to be found in Revelation (see 13:5). Moreover the length of time that the little horn continues his blasphemy in Daniel 7:25 is said to be 'a time, times, and the dividing of time', which is exactly the period of the beast in Revelation 13 — 'forty and two months'. Those needing proof of this computation will find it discussed at length on pages 71 to 73.

We do not pretend to be able to piece together all the prophetic imagery. Daniel found much that was sealed to him, and while many sealed things are opened for us in the book of the Revelation, it is the very nature of prophecy to veil as well as to reveal until the time is at hand.

The Most High takes the kingdom

Daniel 7:9-14 is perhaps the grandest apocalyptic passage of the Old Testament, and is comparable with the glorious passages of the Revelation. The destruction of the beast and the consignment of its body to the burning flame usher in the kingdom of the Most High. A close parallel is found in Revelation 11:15-18:

'And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever ... Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned ... and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth'.

The remaining prophecies of the book of Daniel are unfoldings, in fuller detail, of the great and dreadful events that usher in the time of the end. The interest centres in the feet of the image, the fourth beast and especially the ten horns. These will engage our attention as we continue our studies. We would most earnestly exhort our readers to read and re-read the actual prophecy itself — our notes can at best be but a few fingerposts pointing out the way.
The eastern question (Dan. 8)

Daniel’s vision of the four beasts, which was given in the first year of Belshazzar, was followed in the third year of that king by a supplementary vision of two beasts. We know from Daniel’s own statement at the end of chapter 7 that he pondered the meaning of the vision very seriously:

‘Hitherto is the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart’ (Dan. 7:28).

Daniel would have no great difficulty in understanding the general teaching of chapter 7; he would rejoice in the revelation given of the establishing of Messiah’s kingdom, yet evidently there was something that troubled him. It changed his countenance, and apparently affected his health, but he kept the matter to himself. Much the same is said in 8:27:

‘And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it’ (or “I was dumbfounded at the vision, but none became aware of it”, just as 7:28, “I kept the matter in my heart”).

We are left with the impression that Daniel was staggered by the revelation of what was coming on the earth, and as we survey the series of visions that were given we shall discover that they all focus attention upon the period under the ten kings, and the doings of the little horn who is first described in chapter 7. Daniel tells us that he particularly enquired the meaning of the fourth beast:

‘And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom’ (Dan. 7:20-22).
Daniel is now to be put into possession of further information concerning this terrible blasphemer and oppressor, and in a vision sees a conflict between a ram and a he goat. The ram had two horns, one higher than the other, the higher one coming up last: the he-goat had a very prominent horn between its eyes. The ram was overcome, and his two horns broken, while the goat waxed great, but its notable horn was broken. At the breaking of this great horn, four came up towards the four winds of heaven, and from one of them came a little horn who grew and pushed his conquests to the south, the east, and to the pleasant land of Israel. Then it assayed still further conquests and trampled down the host of the stars to the ground, and magnified itself even against God Himself. The daily sacrifice was stopped, and truth was cast to the ground. At this point one angel is heard speaking to another, and asking how long this desolation should last. The answer made in Daniel’s hearing was that it should be unto 2,300 days and then the sanctuary should be cleansed. The interpretation of the vision is now given to Daniel, and we may set out the details as follows:

**The Ram.**— This represents the kings of Media and Persia. The ram was the symbol of Persia, and is found upon ancient Persian coins: it was worn by kings, and used, with its curling horns, as pillar capitals and volutes at Persepolis, the metropolis of the kingdom.

**The He Goat.**— This is the symbol of Greece. According to legend, an oracle directed the first settlers to follow a goat, and the word Egeæ, which is still found on the map, is from aix, a goat. The great horn is said to represent ‘the first king’ (Dan. 8:21), and so stands for Alexander the Great.

**The Four.**— At the death of Alexander, his kingdom was divided amongst his generals. Ptolemy took Egypt, Palestine, and parts of Asia Minor; Cassander, Macedonia and Greece; Lysimachus, Thrace and Bythinia, and Seleucus, Syria and East of the Euphrates. Just as the silver kingdom of Persia is said to be ‘inferior’ to the
golden kingdom of Babylon, so, at the death of Alexander, his kingdom waned: it was not held together by these four heads 'in his power'.

Thus far we have a prophecy of what is now past history. But Daniel, however, had no information from which he could tell whether the interval between the fourfold division of Alexander's kingdom and the rise of the little horn would be long or short. In this respect, we have the advantage, for we know that a very long interval was intended. However, the interval, whether long or short, is passed over in silence, and we come to the time when the little horn should appear.

**THE LITTLE HORN.**—This is a king of fierce countenance or mighty presence, who understood dark sentences. The latter characteristic is indicative of something deeper than mere 'skill in dissimulation', for it indicates that he will be acquainted with the depths of Satan. 'A dark saying' is an expression used in Psalms 49:4, 78:2, and Proverbs 1:6 for deep parabolic utterances or 'mysteries', and is found in Chaldee form in Daniel 5:12. Immediately following the statement concerning his understanding of dark sentences is a further revelation concerning the secret of his power: 'His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power' (Dan. 8:24). Revelation 13:2 and 2 Thessalonians 2:9,10 have since been written to make clear to us the satanic source of this king's power.

**THE TIME.**—This all takes place in the latter time of the kingdom of the four heads of Grecian dominion, and is still further defined by the added statement, 'when the transgressors are come to the full'. This appears to be a principle upon which God acts. Abraham was told that his seed would have to wait four hundred years, and in bondage for a part of that time, because 'the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full' (Gen. 15:16). The longsuffering of God waited through the period covered by the Acts until Israel had filled up the measure of their fathers (Matt. 23:32 and 1 Thess. 2:16). The mystery of iniquity is at work at present beneath the surface. Day by day it
approaches nearer to the moment when it will stand forth revealed in all its antichristian blasphemy.

**BLASPHEMY.**— 2 Thessalonians 2 reveals the fact that when the moment arrives for the manifestation of the man of sin, he will be found seated in the temple of God claiming divine worship. So also in Revelation 13. Satan, in the temptation in the wilderness, offered the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them to Christ for one act of worship, and what was refused by the Christ of God will be rendered by the man of sin. So again in Daniel 8, 'He waxed great, even to the host of heaven'. He causes the daily sacrifice to cease, and casts down the place of the sanctuary, which tells us that we are in that period covered by the seventh week of Daniel 9 — which, though now known to us, was not, then, to Daniel — a period when Israel shall be back in their land, their temple built, and their worship re-established. Note, further, the character of this king. He is 'little', but waxes great. ‘He magnifies himself’, he ‘destroys wonderfully’. ‘Policy’, ‘craft’ and ‘peace’ are his weapons and instruments.

**THE SAINTS.**— The prophecy shows that this king shall ‘wear out the saints of the Most High’, and they are given into his hands for ‘a time, times, and dividing of time’. These saints are the object of the little horn’s hatred in Daniel 8. ‘The host of the stars’ is interpreted as of the ‘mighty and holy people’ (Dan. 8:24). These passages give us the first glimpse of the great tribulation and time of Jacob’s trouble, and it was the contemplation of these awful times that staggered Daniel and left him prostrate. But in Daniel 7 it is revealed that at the time of the end the horn shall forfeit his dominion, and that ‘the saints of the Most High take the kingdom’, the end of this awful king being swift and complete, for ‘he shall be broken without hand’. Just as the image of Daniel 2 was smashed to pieces by a stone cut out without hands, so is it here. Human agencies can never bring in the millennium, neither can they destroy the evil that is here. That is the work of the Lord.
THE 2,300 DAYS.— The time periods of the book of Daniel are of extreme importance, and rather than spoil the subject by a brief note here, we would ask the reader to wait until we deal with the subject later — see pages 76 to 83.

THE EASTERN QUESTION.— Enough has been said to show the supreme importance of what is called 'The Eastern Question'. Public opinion is divided as to the wisdom of Britain holding the mandate in Palestine, but there is something greater even than the voice of the people, it is the Will of God. No one would have thought in 1914 that the great European War could not end until Jerusalem had been transferred from Turkish authority to the League of Nations, but the hour had come, and the wrath of man can be bent to praise Him Who ruleth in the heavens.

Out of one of the four divisions of Alexander's kingdom, the final great apostate will spring. We who have received such wondrous grace as to be numbered among those who are the members of the Body of Christ, will never see those days that troubled Daniel, nevertheless we cannot be unconcerned in regard to any part of the great purpose of the ages, and we rejoice to know that the saints of the Most High will yet take the kingdom, and, above all, that the Son of man Himself shall one day, and that soon, enter into His glory.
CHAPTER 3

Daniel 9 – Part 1 — The prophecies of Jeremiah

Our studies hitherto in the book of Daniel have not been light, neither have they made easy reading, but in comparison with those of Daniel 9 our previous difficulties have been relatively simple. They have but prepared the way for the difficult task now before us.

While Daniel 9 is complete in itself, it follows chapter 8, supplying fuller details, just as chapter 8 supplements chapter 7; and it will be wise to retain what we have already seen for our present help. Daniel’s increasing concern has been regarding the prophetic future and that which concerns the little horn and his own people. He has been taught that past history foreshadows future events, and we are therefore prepared to find that a seventy-year period of Jerusalem’s desolation and Israel’s captivity has a corresponding period of seventy-times-seven associated with Israel, Jerusalem and desolation. Chapter 9 is in itself a considerable theme, but, as Daniel 9 to 12 forms a section of the book, it will perhaps be wise to exhibit the general structure of the passage before entering into detail.

Daniel 9 to 12 as a whole

A 9:1. First year of Darius.
          Daniel, ‘greatly beloved’.
D 9:23-27. ‘I am come to shew thee’.
A 10:1-3. Third year of Cyrus.
C 10:4-21. The man clothed in linen.
          Daniel, ‘greatly beloved’.
D 11 and 12. ‘I will shew thee’.

It will be seen in the above structure (members D and D) that chapters 11 and 12 are a further expansion of the seventy weeks and the abomination of desolation spoken
of in Daniel 9:23-27. Chapters 11 and 12 have, in addition, an interrelated correspondence, which we hope to show in its proper place.

We return now to Daniel 9, knowing at least that we are still pursuing the one theme of the book, the time of the end; though we may differ from others in our understanding of the true approach to that end, the ultimate theme is unaffected. In the fulness of time Christ came, whether we name the year A.D. 1, 4 B.C., or refrain from assigning a date at all. And so Christ will come again at the close of the seventy weeks, whether they be weeks of days, weeks of years, or, as some believe, of both. Whether we are able to compute the time or not, He will surely come.

To enable the reader to follow the theme without confusion, we divide our study into four sections:

1. The prophecy of Jeremiah (Dan. 9:1-2).
2. The prayer of Daniel (Dan. 9:3-23).
3. The principle of computing prophetic times.
4. The prophecy of the seventy weeks.

The prophecy of Jeremiah

Daniel himself was a prophet, to whom had been granted the spiritual ability to see the meaning of Nebuchadnezzar’s visions, and to witness the two visions dealing with the end of the indignation. It is with this event, linked with Jeremiah’s prophecy, that Daniel 9 opens. We have in Zechariah, positive proof that the ‘time of indignation’ and ‘the seventy years’ of Jeremiah refer to the same period:

‘O LORD of Hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which Thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?’ (Zech. 1:12).

From Isaiah 10:5 we learn that the Assyrian is the rod of the Lord’s anger — ‘And the staff in their hand is mine indignation’. The Assyrian is sent against ‘an hypocritical nation ... to tread them down like the mire of the streets’ (Isa. 10:6). The Assyrian nation does not, however, intend
to be of service to the Lord: it is but fulfilling its own schemes of conquest:

`Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks' (Isa. 10:12).

We are prepared by our previous studies to find that the indignation accomplished against Jerusalem by the Assyrian is a foreshadowing of `the last end of the indignation’, a future period alluded to in Isaiah 26:20. This period is in mind in Daniel 9:

`In the first year of his (Darius’) reign I Daniel understood by books the number of years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem’ (Dan. 9:2).

Among the passages written by Jeremiah that Daniel would have read is Jeremiah 25:11:

`And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years’.

Another passage that would have attracted Daniel’s attention is Jeremiah 29:1-10:

`To all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon ... For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place’.

A further passage that would have been of help to Daniel is found in Jeremiah 27:7:

`And all nations shall serve him (Nebuchadnezzar, verse 6), and his son, and his son’s son (Belshazzar), until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him’.

The proclamation of Cyrus

Another item that bears upon this part of our study is found in Daniel 9:1:

`In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans'.
Sir H. Rawlinson has shown that the name Ahasuerus is, like Pharaoh, an appellative, meaning ‘Venerable King’, and not used exclusively of any one monarch. Similarly the name Darius, according to Professor Sayce, means ‘The Maintainer’, an appellative of more than one king ... rather like the English, ‘Defender of the Faith’, which belongs to no one monarch in particular. It is considered by those who have made chronology their study that the Darius of chapter 9 is the Cyrus of chapter 10; the reader will find Appendixes 50 (7:5) and 57 of The Companion Bible helpful in this connection. It would be an unwarranted digression here to enter into the arguments concerning the genealogy of the kings of Persia; but we do feel that our readers should realize the importance of the conclusion that the Ahasuerus of Esther 1:1, the Artaxerxes of Ezra 6:14 and Nehemiah 2:1, and the Darius of Daniel 5:31 represent the same person under different names. The king married Esther, whose son is the Cyrus of Scripture.

It is most interesting to see that Daniel’s prayer in chapter 9 concerning the restoration of Jerusalem is dated in the first year of the king under whose edict the restoration was commenced.

We must now consider, together with Daniel 9, the opening words of Ezra 1:

‘Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel (He is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem’ (Ezra 1:1-4).
The proclamation of Artaxerxes

Before we are fully prepared to continue our study of Daniel 9, there is one further proclamation to be brought into line. We read in Nehemiah 1:1:

'It came to pass in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace'.

This twentieth year of Artaxerxes (see Neh. 2:1) dates as forty-two years from the beginning of the Babylonian servitude, thirty-five years from Jehoiachin's captivity, twenty-three years from the destruction of Jerusalem, and twenty-five years from the beginning of the desolations (see The Companion Bible appendix 50 vii (5) p. 67).

There are three distinct periods of seventy years that must be kept distinct, if we are to avoid confusion: the Servitude, the Captivity, and the Desolations. (See The Companion Bible Special Note On 2 Chron. 36:21, p. 615).

1. The SERVITUDE began in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, and ended with the decree of Cyrus just quoted.
2. The CAPTIVITY is dated by Ezekiel as from the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, when Jeconiah (formerly known as Jehoiachin) was carried away captive.
3. The DESOLATIONS commenced with the last siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and are the subject of Daniel's prayer in chapter 9.

While, therefore, Daniel is associated with the seventy years' desolation, Nehemiah is connected with the seventy years' captivity:

'The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire' (Neh. 1:3).

The effect of this report upon Nehemiah is very similar to the effect of Jeremiah's words on Daniel; to appreciate the parallel, Daniel 9 and Nehemiah 1 should be read before reading Revelation.

In Nehemiah 2 things reach a crisis. As the king's cupbearer, Nehemiah held a high office, for, in effect, he
stood between the king and possible death by assassination
or poisoning. To have appeared at all distraught in the
royal presence might have proved fatal; for he might have
fallen under suspicion and have been executed
immediately. So, when the king comments upon his sad
looks, we read: ‘Then was I very sore afraid’ (Neh. 2:2).
Nehemiah then tells the king of the condition of the city of
Jerusalem, and the king asks, ‘For what dost thou make
request?’ Then we read, ‘So I prayed to the God of
heaven. And I said unto the king’ (Neh. 2:4,5).

We pause a moment to observe this true conception of
prayer. In Nehemiah’s day ritual was of divine institution;
and place, time, and attitude in prayer, were ordained by
law. But Nehemiah was no formalist, for true prayer is
ever above all forms. Without any apparent interval, a
prayer winged its way into the presence of a greater King
than Artaxerxes and deliverance followed.

One other point of interest is contained in Nehemiah
2:5,6. Nehemiah requests of the king that he may be
granted leave of absence to go into Judah and rebuild the
city of Jerusalem. The king replies to Nehemiah (the
queen also sitting by him), ‘For how long shall thy journey
be, and when wilt thou return’? The queen here mentioned
in the parenthesis is none other than Esther, who had
already been instrumental in the deliverance of her people
as recorded in the book bearing her name. The presence of
the queen here is one of the links in the working out of
God’s purpose. Under Mordecai, Esther saved Israel; her
presence here evidently influenced Artaxerxes, and her
son, Cyrus, has his own place in the scheme, as we have
seen.

The reader is asked to keep this twentieth year of
Artaxerxes in mind as reference will be made to it when
dealing with the seventy-sevens of Daniel 9.
Daniel 9 – Part 2 — The prayer of Daniel

The prophet Jeremiah, the prayer of Daniel, and the fixing of the date of the proclamation to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem, give point to the prayer of Daniel.

There is so much in this prayer, that we cannot hope to do justice either to its form or to its subject-matter. We can only point out some of its essential features. The nature of the section — Daniel 9:3-19 — makes any attempt at an outline difficult, but the following will throw into prominence the main features of the petition, and will therefore be of some service:

Daniel 9:3-19

A 9:3. Daniel's face set unto the Lord God.
B 9:4-. Prayer and confession.
C 9:4,5-. Covenant-keeping God. We have sinned.
   b 6. Disobedience to message of prophets.
   c 7-9-. Righteousness belongeth unto the Lord.
          Confusion belongeth unto us.
          Mercies belong unto the Lord.

THE PROPHETS.
   a 9-. Rebellion.
   b 10. Disobedience to message of prophets.

             b 12. Confirmed words.

THE LAW. a 13. The evil, as Moses said.

C 9:15. Covenant kept of old by God. We have sinned.
A 9:17-19. The Lord's face to shine upon the Sanctuary.
Daniel’s prayer centres round the fact that Israel’s terrible desolation is the outcome of rebellion against the word of God, sent from time to time through the prophets, and is but the fulfilment of the curse and the oath, written in the law of Moses long before.

God evidently keeps His word, and Israel have most surely merited their punishment. Yet Daniel reminds himself that God not only watches over the evil to perform it, but in the mighty deliverance of Israel from Egypt in days gone by, He was true to His covenant promises, even though Israel had failed. The prayer, therefore, while a confession of Israel’s sin, reminds God of His covenant relationship with the people and the city.

There is a beautiful progression in the prayer. At first Daniel speaks of his people without any term of association with the Lord. He speaks of our kings, our princes, our fathers, and the people of the land; of the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of all Israel near and far. Not until we reach the tenth verse is any link established; there Daniel speaks of the Lord our God, and again in verses 13, 14 and 15. In verse 15 a fuller claim is made; this rebellious people are ‘Thy people’. In verse 16 the desolate city is ‘Thy city’, ‘Thy holy mountain’; and ‘Thy people are become a reproach’. In verse 17, Daniel is ‘Thy servant’, and the desolate temple ‘Thy sanctuary’. Then it all comes pouring forth. Reserve is abandoned. Before this covenant-keeping God, Daniel pours out his petition:

‘O my God, incline Thine ear, and hear; open Thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by Thy Name: for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for Thine own sake, O my God: for the city and Thy people are called by Thy Name’ (Dan. 9:18,19).
The curse and the covenant

Because an expression used by Daniel in his prayer is used also by Jeremiah in exactly the same way, it does not follow that Daniel borrowed it from Jeremiah. But on the other hand, Daniel could hardly have read Jeremiah’s prophecy without realizing how the word ‘watch’ suited his need. The word shaquad occurs in Daniel 9:14: ‘Therefore the Lord watched over the evil, and brought it upon us’. In Jeremiah the words shaqed and shaqad are translated ‘almond’, ‘hasten’ and ‘watch’. At first sight there seems little connection between these words, but let us examine the matter more closely:

“What seest thou? And I said, I see the rod of an almond tree. Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten My word to perform it’ (Jer. 1:11,12).

The almond is very early in blossom, and so is suggestive of alertness, vigilance, watchfulness. We have, therefore, a paronomasia (a high order of the common pun): ‘An almond tree (shaqed) ... I am watching (shaqad)’. The Lord watches over His word of judgment: ‘Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good’ (Jer. 44:27). Daniel recognized this; the Lord had kept His word. The curse pronounced by Moses and the oath sworn by God had been fulfilled, for, as Moses had said, a nation of fierce countenance had come upon them, destroying their possessions, regarding not age nor sex, besieging their cities, and causing them to be scattered from one end of the earth to the other (Deut. 28). There was, however, another aspect of the truth. Was God so faithful to His threat of wrath, and would He be less faithful to His covenant and mercy? So Jeremiah continues:

‘It shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build, and to plant, saith the LORD’ (Jer. 31:28).

This faithfulness of the Lord issues in the making of a new covenant, which is placed in contrast with the old covenant and the coming out of Egypt. The new covenant
is not vaguely stated; it has as its objective the restoration of Israel (see Jer. 31:36,37). Daniel knew this. He dares, therefore, to recall the deliverance from Egypt, and to couple this fact with the fact of Israel’s sin. No promises are made of reform. He throws himself and his people upon the ‘mercies and forgiveness of God’. He rests his case entirely upon covenant grace. He sees through the centuries the coming Messiah, Who was to be ‘cut off, but not for Himself’, and anticipates the ‘blood of the new covenant’, shed for many, for the forgiveness of sins. His prayer is honoured and answered:

‘Whiles I was speaking ... Gabriel ... touched me ... and said ... I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding ... I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved’ (Dan. 9:20-23).

Daniel 9 – Part 3

The principle of computing prophetic times

How many different ways of computing the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 have been put forward by earnest men of God? We do not know, but there are many; and the fact that such diversity exists must humble us before the Lord. Differences of opinion exist as to where the reckoning begins, where the reckoning ends, whether the ‘weeks’ are weeks of days or of years, and whether the prince that shall come be Titus (a.d. 70) or the beast of the Apocalypse. Most affirm that there is now only the last week of Daniel 9 to be fulfilled; while others believe that the seventy weeks are literal weeks of days all yet future. Facing this monument of human failure and contradiction it seems at first an act of impertinence to step forward and make even a tentative suggestion. Yet it is impossible to avoid the subject, and, therefore, with every recognition of the faithfulness and ability of others, we humbly place on record the way in which we have been led by scriptural principles to a conclusion in the matter.

The first principle that demands recognition is that which deals with the ‘Lo-ammi’ periods of Israel’s history. For the benefit of those who may not know the meaning of
this term we state that it has reference to Hosea 1:9: ‘Call his name Lo-ammi, for ye are not My people’. The principle we have in mind is that those periods when Israel are out of favour ... and so ‘Lo-ammi’ ... are not reckoned in the prophetic calendar. So far as God’s scheme of time is concerned, such periods do not exist. They are, however, reckoned in the calendar of the world, and consequently must be taken into account.

Perhaps a rather homely illustration will help to make the point clearer. A man, let us suppose, has an account at the bank, and upon enquiry he learns that his balance stands at £500. From one point of view he may truthfully say that he owns £500. There is another point of view, however; he owes £200 on his house, and other outstanding bills total £200; so that although his bank book shows £500, he actually owns only £100. The bank book figure represents the calendar of the world, and the residual figure the prophetic times. The ‘Lo-ammi’ periods correspond with the debts and must be subtracted to obtain the prophetic periods.

The ‘Lo-ammi’ principle applied

We do not know whether Mr. G. H. Pember should be credited with the following illustration of this principle, but we acknowledge our indebtedness in the matter to his book, *The Great Prophecies of the Gentiles*. In 1 Kings 6:1 we are told that Solomon began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign, and in the four hundred and eightieth year after the exodus from Egypt. In Acts 13:18-21 we find a different computation. Paul there speaks of 40 years in the wilderness, 450 years under the Judges, and 40 under Saul. If to this we add the 40 years of David’s reign (1 Kings 2:11) and the 3 years of Solomon’s reign before he commenced to build (1 Kings 6:1) we have a total of 573 years. The two figures are therefore 573 and 480, showing an apparent discrepancy of 93 — a discrepancy which needs explanation. Reverting to our previous illustration, the 573 represent the balance as
shown by the bank book, the 93 represent the unpaid bills still owing, and the 480 the actual amount in credit. In other words there are 93 ‘Lo-ammi’ years to be accounted for — years which are omitted in Solomon’s computation, but included in Paul’s. We must first point out that in 1 Kings 6:1, as The Companion Bible makes clear, it is an ordinal and not a cardinal number — 480th and not 480. This leaves room for the idea that this time is part of some longer period.

There were five occasions when the Lord ‘sold’ His people into the hands of their enemies, and for these five periods the prophetic clock stopped and time was unrecorded. These periods are all found in the book of Judges:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mesopotamia</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>Lo-ammi (Judges 3:8).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moab</td>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>Lo ammi (Judges 3:14).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canaan</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Lo-ammi (Judges 4:3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midian</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>Lo ammi (Judges 6:1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philistine</td>
<td>40 years</td>
<td>Lo-ammi (Judges 13:1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>93 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of course no time can be reckoned ‘Lo-ammi’ that is not concerned with the whole nation; raids and bondage that affected only some of the tribes are not included.

The first principle, therefore, that we must observe when computing prophetic periods is that which allows for the non-reckoning of ‘Lo-ammi’ periods. This applies in both directions; we cannot allow a period of time to be excluded while Israel is a nation before God, any more than we can allow a period to be reckoned when Israel is temporarily set aside. This we shall find compels us to include the Acts of the Apostles in the seventy weeks, and also compels us to exclude the period when Jerusalem was still unbuilt in Nehemiah’s day.
The seventy weeks

'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city' (Dan. 9:24).

If we understand the word 'week' to mean seven days, we have a period of a little more than one year and four months to consider, and of this a smaller period is occupied in building and restoring Jerusalem — certainly a short time for such an operation. When, however, Daniel wishes to make us understand literal weeks, each of seven days, he adds the word 'days':

'I Daniel was mourning three full weeks' (literally, weeks of days) (Dan. 10:2).
'Till three whole weeks were fulfilled' (literally, weeks of days) (Dan. 10:3).

To make the matter certain, the angelic visitor declares that on the first day of Daniel's fasting his words had been heard and the angel sent, but that for 'one and twenty days' he had been withstood. This carefulness on Daniel's part is one argument in favour of the view that ordinary weeks of days are not intended in Daniel 9. A further argument is that Daniel had been occupied with prophecies that dealt with a period of seventy years, and the angelic announcement of the seventy weeks seems but an expansion.

Another argument in favour of the years' interpretation is provided by the scriptural treatment of the last week. It will be observed that this last of the seventy weeks is divided into two parts:

'He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease' (Dan. 9:27).

Now Daniel refers more than once to a peculiar period at the time of the end:

'Let seven times pass over him' (Dan. 4:16).
'A time and times and the dividing of time' (Dan. 7:25).
'A time, times, and an half' (Dan. 12:7).
A consultation of the margin of Daniel 11:13 will show that ‘times’ may be synonymous with ‘years’. If that is so, then a time, times and a half may be a prophetic and cryptic way of describing three-and-a-half years. This being just half the seven year period which meets exactly the requirements of Daniel 9:27.

We have, however, clearer evidence in the book of the Revelation:

‘A time, and times, and half a time’ (Rev. 12:14).

This is the period during which the woman is nourished in the wilderness. In Revelation 12:6 we read:

“They should feed her there 1,260 days’.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that 1,260 days, and a time, times, and a half, are periods of the same duration.

There is evidence in Scripture of the recognition of a year of 360 days. For example, it is computed that between the seventeenth day of the second month, and the seventeenth day of the seventh month is 150 days (Gen. 7 and 8), a computation which supposes a month of thirty days. Dividing 1260 by 30 we have 42 months, or three-and-a-half years. Now Scripture speaks of a period of 42 months, and places it in such proximity to that of 1,260 days as to remove all doubt as to the length of the prophetic year:

‘The holy city shall they tread under foot 42 months’ (Rev. 11:2).

‘My two witnesses shall prophesy 1,260 days’ (Rev. 11:3).

We have already seen that Revelation 13 speaks of the time when the fourth beast of Daniel 8 shall be in power; and if Daniel 9 speaks of this same power and period, we may expect to find here some confirmation:

‘He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (a period of 7 years): and in the midst of the week (after a period of 3 & half years, 42 months, or 1,260 days) he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease’ (Dan. 9:27).
And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue 42 months (Rev. 13:5).

That the Hebrew language can refer to 'Sabbaths of years' is shown in Leviticus 25:8, where a period of 49 years is also called 'seven sabbaths of years, seven times seven years'.

These things furnish sufficient proof that the final week of Daniel 9 is a period of seven years. And if the last week be a week of years, it follows that the seventy weeks are also weeks of years, so that the seventy weeks 'determined' represent a period of 490 years.

When does the period of 490 years commence?

After revealing to Daniel a prophetic period of 490 years marked off on the divine calendar, the angel proceeds to divide the number of years up in a rather strange way. We first learn that during the 490 years the following events are to be fulfilled:

'To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness ... and to anoint the most Holy' (Dan. 9:24).

The angel next proceeds to give further light upon this time by saying that the period from the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of Messiah the Prince will be 7 weeks and 62 weeks, and that after the 62 weeks have elapsed the Messiah will be cut off. We found it useful when speaking of 'Lo-ammi' periods to use a simple illustration to make the matter clearer. It may be of service to use the same method here. Suppose that a motorist is being directed to a certain destination and that, instead of being told that his goal is 69 miles away, he is told that it is 7 miles and 62 miles away. If after that somewhat cryptic statement, a remark is added about some feature in the road that marks a junction, the obvious thing for the motorist to do would be to travel the first seven miles and then look out for some change. If at the end of 7 miles of rather bad country lane the car emerged into a
new, well-made road which continued for the remaining 62 miles, he would realize the reason for dividing the distance. Moreover, if he had been told that at the end of 62 miles he would come to a cross, he would look for it at the end of 62 miles of new road, for so the direction had indicated.

Now it must be obvious that when the angel speaks of 7 weeks as distinct from 62 weeks, he has some special reason for it. The angel also speaks of the building of the wall and the street of Jerusalem as an event related to the time periods with which his message deals. *The Companion Bible*, in Appendix 58, gives the history of Nehemiah and Ezra. It is much too long to quote here, but we give two extracts to prove our point. We must leave our readers to test the matter further by consulting that appendix for themselves.

455 B.C. | Neh. 1:1 to 2:8.—Hanani’s report in the month Chislev leads to the ‘going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem’ (Dan. 9:25).

454 B.C. | By Artaxerxes in his twentieth year.

407 B.C. | Nehemiah obtains leave of absence (Neh. 13:6), and returns to be present at.

405 B.C. | The dedication of the temple.

This ends the ‘seven sevens’ from the going forth of the commandment in 454 B.C.

This, then, is the first space covered, the building of the wall corresponding to the seven miles of bad road in the illustration. We now arrive at the most important feature of our discussion, and one that we have seen canvassed in no other work on Daniel. It follows from the logical application of the ‘Lo-ammi’ principle. The question is whether or not the 490 years, set apart for the achievement of God’s purpose in Israel, begin at the going forth of the proclamation to rebuild Jerusalem. To this question expositors give an affirmative answer, but the ‘Lo-ammi’ principle demands a negative one. We read in Nehemiah:
'The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire' (Neh. 1:3).

Do these expressions describe Jerusalem as in favour or in desolation? There is only one answer. Nehemiah saw in these events the fulfilment of the curse threatened by law and prophets:

'If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations' (Neh. 1:8).

Daniel also uses terms that imply 'Lo-ammi' conditions. Jerusalem is 'desolate' (Dan. 9:2); Israel are 'driven' (verse 7); the curse is poured upon them (verse 11); the visitation upon Jerusalem is unprecedented (verse 12). And in verse 16 there is anger and fury and reproach.

The seventy-sevens cannot commence until Jerusalem is rebuilt and the curse removed; this makes clear the reason for the division of the years into seven sevens and sixty-two sevens. The seven sevens or 49 years represent the time occupied in the rebuilding of the wall and street of Jerusalem by Nehemiah in time of trouble, and the period ends at the dedication of the temple (Ezra 6:16-18).

To revert to our illustration, the period covered by the building of the wall up to the dedication of the temple corresponds with the first 7 miles of country road. At the dedication of the temple at the end of the seven sevens the 'Lo-ammi' period ends; the new high road is reached. It is then a distance of 62 miles to the Cross; or, leaving the illustration, an unbroken period of 62 sevens to the time of 'the Messiah the Prince'. Those who include the 49 years of rebuilding, include a period when Israel was 'Lo-ammi', and they have no alternative to excluding from their reckoning the whole period of the Acts of the Apostles. But it is quite certain that Israel were not set aside as a people until Acts 28, so that the period of the Acts must be included. Our interpretation has required only 62 sevens; so that there is still scope remaining. From A.D. 29 to A.D. 63, the usual dates now given for the Crucifixion and
Acts 28, respectively, is a period of 35 years; this accounts for 5 sevens. Three sevens, therefore, remain for the future, and these are dealt with in the book of the Revelation: seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials. The final ‘seven’ is concerned with the beast, the false prophet, antichrist and Babylon, as we read in Daniel 9.

**Daniel 9 – Part 4 — The prophecy of the seventy weeks**

The prophecy of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 is divided into three parts, each of which is devoted to an explanation of events associated with one of the great time periods of the prophecy. This can be seen more easily if set out as follows:

**Daniel 9:24-27**

**A₁ 9:24.**

**SEVENTY SEvens.**

- a Finish transgression.
- b Make an end *(chatham)* of sin.
  - c Make everlasting righteousness.
- a Bring in everlasting righteousness.
- b Seal up *(chatham)* vision and prophecy.
  - c Anoint the Most Holy.

**A₂ 9:25,26.**

**SEVEN SEvens and SIXTYTWO SEvens.**

- a The City.— Restoration.
- b The Messiah.— Coming.
  - c Seven sevens and sixtytwo sevens.
  - c After sixtytwo sevens.
- b The Messiah.— Cut off.
- a The City.— Destroyed.

**A₃ 9:26,27.**

**THE ONE SEVEN.**

**THE MIDST OF THE SEVEN.**

- a Desolation decreed *(shamem).*
  - End of Desolator.
- b Covenant made.
  - c One seven.— 7 years.
  - c Midst of seven.— 3.5 years.
- b Covenant broken.
- a Desolation decreed *(shamem).*
  - End of Desolator,

‘Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city’. — The word ‘determined’ means ‘to cut off’, and the passage indicates that God has set apart
this period of time in which He will accomplish His purposes for the people and the city. At first there appears to be an undue repetition in the words of verse 24: ‘To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity’. But on examination the verse is found to be both true, like all Scripture, and prophetic.

‘To finish’ is a translation of kala, which means ‘to restrain’, or ‘shut up’, as in a prison: ‘Zedekiah ... had shut him up’ (Jer. 32:3). As a substantive it is translated ‘prison’, as in 1 Kings 22:27, 2 Kings 17:4 and eight other places. ‘The transgression’ that is to be ‘shut up’, or ‘imprisoned’, has already been spoken of in Daniel. Pesha, ‘transgression’, and pasha, ‘transgressor’, occur in Daniel only in 8:12, 13 and 23. To read these occurrences in their contexts is of itself sufficient indication that the period of the last seven of Daniel 9 is the setting, and as to what ‘transgression’ is to be ‘imprisoned’:

‘The little horn ... magnified himself even to (against) the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression ... the transgression of desolation ... in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full’ (Dan. 8:9,11-13,23).

In Daniel 9 and Matthew 24:15 it is ‘the abomination of desolation’: here it is ‘the transgression of desolation’. This refers to the violation of the temple and its sacrifices, and the desolation, once more, of Jerusalem. The day, however, is fixed when this desolation shall for ever cease, and the Desolator be imprisoned. It does not require great perception to see here a forecast of the incarceration of the, the False Prophet and Satan as revealed in the Apocalypse.

‘To make an end of sins’. — The word ‘chatham’ occurs twice in Daniel 9:24:

(a) ‘To make an end of sins’, and
(b) ‘To seal up the vision and prophecy’.
Job uses the expression: 'My transgression is sealed up in a bag and thou sewest up mine iniquity' (Job 14:17). In Deuteronomy 32:34 the Lord is quoted as saying: 'Is not this laid up in store with Me, and sealed up among My treasures?' and goes on to speak of the day of vengeance. In Daniel 12:4 there is a paronomasia, 'shut up' being satham, and 'seal' being chatham, and this is repeated in verse 9, 'shut up' being there 'close up'. It appears that the sense of 'sealing' here is not so much that of confirmation, as of 'closing' or 'shutting up'. The one other reference to 'sealing' in Daniel is in connection with the den of lions (Dan. 6:17), and the object of that sealing is given: 'That the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel'. The statement as to the sealing up of Israel's sins must be read with such other wonderful expressions as:

'Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea' (Micah 7:19).
'Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back' (Isa. 38:17).
'I will remember their sin no more' (Jer. 31:34).

The reason why God can righteousness seal up Israel's sins, sew them in a bag, and cast them behind His back, is that the great atonement has been accomplished by Christ.

'To make reconciliation for iniquity'—here the word is kaphar, and means 'to make atonement'. This is vital. This is precious. It belongs to no one section of the redeemed. In spite of what certain words in the English translation may, from a superficial reading, appear to teach, atonement belongs to both Old and New Testaments. This vital theme is too vast to be dealt with here, but we have devoted some space to it in the series entitled 'Redemption' (see The Berean Expositor vol. 17, p. 118), which should be consulted.

Thus end the first three blessings that are to come. Three more follow as a sequel:

'To bring in age abiding righteousness'.
'To seal up the vision and prophecy'.
'To anoint the Most Holy'.
Righteousness is to be the characteristic of Jerusalem and her people at the time of the end:

'Thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city' (Isa. 1:26).

'A King shall reign in righteousness' (Isa. 32:1).

'For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness' (Isa. 62:1).

It is not easy to arrive at an understanding of the words, 'to seal up vision and prophecy'. Some think that their purport may be that vision and prophecy will have finished their work and be no more needed. The statement may mean that God will set His seal to vision and prophecy and all will be fulfilled. Or, as Daniel 12:4 indicates, a sealing up of the prophecies until the time of the end may be foreshadowed. Malachi is called in Rabbinical writings, 'The Seal of the Prophets' because, with him, Old Testament prophecy comes to an end. At present, however, we feel it wise to refrain from expressing a decided opinion as to the true interpretation, and we think that our readers will hold, with us, that rather than risk the perpetuation of error it is better thus to refrain.

'To anoint the Most Holy'.— In Scripture the words translated 'Most Holy' are never used of persons, but always of things dedicated to God. They should be rendered 'Holy of Holies', and refer to the cleansing of the sanctuary spoken of in Daniel 8:14.

These six items cover the glorious restoration that is to take place, but events of great magnitude occur before the goal is reached — events that revolve around the persons and work of Christ, and Anti-Christ:

'From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto an Anointed One, a Prince shall be 7 x 7 and 62 x 7: the street shall be built again: and the wall, even in troublous times. And after 62 x 7 shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself' (Dan. 9:25,26 author's translation).

Some of our readers may have noticed that we did not trouble to show that this prophecy was accurately fulfilled.
As to this it is common knowledge that the received date for the 20th year of Artaxerxes is 454 B.C., and 62 x 7 or 434 years + the 7 x 7 or 49 years after 454 B.C. brings us to A.D. 29, the received date for the crucifixion, but when we faced the involved accounts of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon and others, and the evidence of the Behistun Rock that must be unravelled before 454 B.C. could be arrived at, we felt that little good would be accomplished by the survey — and it is contrary to our principles to accept any testimony without investigation. Let it be quite clear, however, that we implicitly believe that Daniel 9 is correct; whatever may be proved or fail to be proved from secular history. It would not, for instance, shake our faith in the slightest if some archaeological discovery called for another readjustment of dates; no one, however learned, would be prepared to go into the witness box and declare on oath the exact number of years after Christ this present year really is. From Adam to Christ chronology is constant in Scripture. Since then God has written no chronology in Scripture, and seeing that the calendar of the period after Christ is so muddled and involved, it is questionable whether God has not intentionally frustrated the attempts at forecasting prophetic dates. The interested reader will find a helpful summary on the subject in The Companion Bible, Appendix 57. When we are dealing with the statements of Scripture, however, we are on solid ground. The Lord rode into Jerusalem, and was acclaimed by the people as the Son of David, when it was near to Passover, and therefore in the month Nisan (Matt. 21:1-16), which is the same month in which the decree was issued by Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1). ‘After’ this Messiah was to be cut off. ‘To be cut off’ implies death by violence, e.g., ‘Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood’ (Gen. 9:11). The expression is, moreover, in constant use in the law where it is used as of the cutting off of an offender from all covenant relations, and of the consequent bearing of his own iniquity: ‘That soul shall be utterly cut off, his iniquity shall be upon him’ (Num. 15:31). It is most blessedly true that when the
Messiah was cut off it was, as the A.V. renders it, 'not for Himself', but the original of Daniel 9:26 does not justify that translation, for it says, 'and have nothing'. Instead of a throne, He had a cross. Instead of many diadems, He wore a crown of thorns. Instead of a kingdom, He had a tomb. Of all the glories spoken of by the prophets, 'He had nothing'! We are thankful for the earlier vision of Daniel 7, which reveals that in God's own time He should be invested with sovereignty, but that meanwhile iniquity was to rear its head and make its final grasp at worldwide dominion before the end came.

This is the revelation of the final week of Daniel. The people of a prince that shall come to destroy the city of Jerusalem. Is this limited to the destruction under Titus in A.D. 69? Jerusalem was again destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 135. Again in A.D. 559, in 636, in 1098, 1099, 1187 and 1244 was this city besieged, plundered and destroyed, by Persian, Saracen, Crusader and Turk — all people of the coming Gentile prince who shall be the incarnation of anti-Semitic cruelty. The focal point of Daniel 9:27 is the confirmation, by this mighty prince, of a league. While the word berith usually refers to the covenants of God, it is used in a lower sense. The word is used when the 'league' between king Asa and Ben-hadad, and the breaking of a 'league' between Ben-hadad and Baasha are spoken of. In Isaiah 28:15 it is called a 'covenant with death and sheol', and inasmuch as this awful covenant was made as a refuge from a threatened overflowing scourge, we can see that it speaks of the same prophetic period as does Daniel 9:27. As the apostle Paul has declared, covenant breaking belongs to the time of the end (Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3). Apostates shall forsake the holy covenant, and do wickedly against it (Dan. 11:30-32), and deceitful dealings, even after a league has been made, are spoken of in Daniel 11:23.

Apparently, the little horn, the final Satanic king, will enter into an agreement with Israel at the opening of Daniel's last week. At the expiry of three and a half years
he breaks his word, turns round upon this people and their worship, and attempts to blot out all sign and evidence of Israel's God and worship.

'He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate' (Dan. 9:27).

*Al kanaph*, 'overspreading', means 'a wing'. Ginsburg, whose authority in matters of the Hebrew text is beyond our estimation, suggests that the true reading should be *Al kanno*, 'in its stead', as we read in Daniel 11:7, where it is translated 'in his estate'. If this reading be the true one, the passage would read:

'He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and in its stead shall stand in the holy place' (see Matt. 24:15) 'the abomination that maketh desolate'.

Scripture uses the word 'abomination' for an idol.

This blasphemy and wicked opposition lasts no longer than three and half years, as Revelation 13:5 confirms:

'Even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (desolator)' (Dan. 9:27).

Here is a reference to the future outpouring of the vials of wrath, ending with the consignment of the beast to the burning flame (Dan. 7:11 and Rev. 19:20). With this the prophecy of Daniel 9 ends.

The remaining chapters (10 to 12) are an expansion of detail bearing upon the closing seven years and the activities of the evil king at the end. This has been demonstrated in the structure of Daniel 9 to 12, given on page 59.

The diagram, opposite, exhibits the orthodox scheme, which *includes* the 49 ‘Lo-ammi’ years, and *excludes*, The Acts; as over against the interpretation given in these studies.
FIG. 1
The Orthodox View

7 x 7  62 x 7  1 x 7

CHURCH BEGINS AT PENTECOST

Nehemiah 1 & 11
Jerusalem rebuilt

FIG. 2
The "Berean" View

7 x 7  62 x 7

LO-AMMI

The Seventy Weeks recognize Israel's position

LO-AMMI

ACTS

REV.
CHAPTER 4

Principalities and powers (Dan. 10)

The prophecy of the seventy sevens, recorded in Daniel 9, is marked by two main features:

(1) Israel's final restoration and blessing,
(2) The rise of the antichristian power at the time of the end.

These two features are intimately related, so that it is practically impossible to study one without studying the other. The three concluding chapters of Daniel, viz., 10, 11 and 12, are one, and should be considered together with chapter 9. This we have already demonstrated in the structure of 9 to 12 set out on page 59.

The two great sections, 9 and 10 to 12 are allied, as may be seen by comparing the statements made in each. We make one comparison here:

'And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate' (or the desolator) (Dan. 9:27).

'And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits' (Dan. 11:31,32).

The opening revelation of Daniel 10 forbids the success of all human schemes for peace and world improvement. The true sense is disguised in the A.V. under the translation: 'but the time appointed (tsaba) was long'. The Companion Bible corrects this by translating: 'but (concerned) a long warfare' and Rotherham's version renders the clause: 'a great warfare'. The same word, which we translate here 'warfare', occurs in Numbers 31:3-6, where it is consistently rendered 'war'.

The word *tsabha* in Daniel 10:1 is translated elsewhere in Daniel by the word ‘host’ (8:10-13), and is used in the title of the Lord, ‘The Lord of Hosts’. Again in Isaiah 40:2 the A.V. itself endorses the translation of Daniel 10:1 suggested above, ‘Her warfare is accomplished’, by adopting it.

Israel’s warfare will be accomplished when Daniel 9 is fulfilled, and the theme of Daniel 10 to 12 is stated by the angel to be ‘warfare, great’. A warfare not only on earth, but in heaven, a warfare waged not only between armies of flesh and blood, but among principalities and powers. Revelation 12, with its ‘war in heaven’, finds its place in these chapters. The war with the Lamb of Revelation 17:14 finds its place here too. The war of the beast against the two witnesses of Revelation 11:7, the war of the dragon against the seed of the woman of Revelation 12:17, and the war with the saints of Revelation 13:7 are all included in this ‘warfare, great’.

There is special interest here for those who see their calling defined in the epistle to the Ephesians, for the veil is removed for a moment, and a glimpse is given of those mighty ‘principalities and powers, the holders of this world’s darkness and spiritual wickednesses’, who are the foes of all who seek to press on with the prize of the high calling of God in view.

We are told that from the first day that Daniel set his heart to understand, and to chasten himself before his God, his words were heard, and a heavenly messenger was sent to make the truth known (Dan. 10:12), yet we learn from verses 2 and 3 that Daniel mourned and fasted for three weeks before the message was delivered. Had no explanation of this long delay been given, we might have ventured upon a variety of conjectures, all of which would most likely have been false. But the heavenly messenger makes known the reason for the delay. Let us first of all get some idea of the glory of this messenger, and then the character of his opponent will be the better understood:
'Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: his body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude' (Dan. 10:5,6).

The close parallel with the description of the Lord found in Revelation 1 will be apparent to every reader. The effect, too, upon Daniel is not unlike that upon John. John fell at the feet of the Lord as 'dead'. Daniel's strength vanished, his comeliness turned into corruption, and he became in a deep sleep with his face toward the ground.

This mighty one revealed to Daniel that 'the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood him twenty-one days'. It is at once obvious, that this could have been no ordinary prince of flesh and blood, for if Daniel, the beloved servant of the Lord, collapsed in his presence, surely the earthly prince of Persia would no less have done so. Not until Michael, one of the chief princes, came to his help, could this mighty one accomplish his mission and reveal the truth to Daniel.

Here, then, the veil is lifted for a moment. We see that there are not only kings and princes upon earth, but that there are satanic representatives at the courts of kings, ever seeking to frustrate the purpose of God. Michael, the Archangel, is said to be 'your prince' (Dan. 10:21), and 'the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people' (Dan. 12:1). With the light of this revelation we can see that the prince and the king of Tyre of Ezekiel 28 are more than men.

The heavenly messenger explains the prophetic character of Daniel 11 and 12 by saying:

'Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days' (Dan. 10:14).

Here is very clear testimony. The events befall Daniel's 'people' — Israel. The period is 'the latter times'. And
the revelation of Daniel 11 and 12 supplements that of Daniel 9, explaining with more detail 'the one week', when the covenant made shall be broken 'in the midst of the week', and a vivid light is thus thrown upon the blasphemous character of 'the desolator'.

A remarkable statement is made in Daniel 10:21:

'But I will shew thee that which is noted in the Scripture of truth'.

First, the Hebrew word rasham, 'noted', is exactly equivalent to the Chaldee reshm of Daniel 5:24,25; 6:8,9,10,12,13, where five of the references deal with the signing of a royal decree, and two with the words of doom written on the wall in Belshazzar's palace.

Secondly, to what did the angel refer when he spoke of the 'Scripture of truth'? Taken out of their context we might be excused for saying that the words referred to the writings of the Old Testament; but, inasmuch as the revelation given to Daniel, and recorded by him, is unknown to the rest of the Old Testament, the question remains — To what Scripture did the angel refer? Seeing that the earthly tabernacle was made after the pattern of the heavenly reality, may we not ask whether there is any reasonable objection to the suggestion that our Scriptures are an earthly shadow of a complete record accessible to the heavenly host, and which, as Psalm 119:89 declares, is 'for ever settled in heaven'? It must be kept in mind that there are many features that are not the subject of revelation in the Scriptures, which nevertheless form a part of the great purpose of the ages. For example, Genesis 3:1 reveals the presence and the character of the Serpent, which later revelation declares to be Satan, but Genesis 1 to 3 makes no attempt to explain how such a being could be found in God's creation.

The opening verse of chapter 11 must be read with the preceding chapter and not with chapter 11. The new revelation and that which the messenger of God came to give Daniel, commences with the words of 11:2, 'and now will I shew thee the truth, Behold ...'.
With the preparation of heart given to Daniel he could endure the terrific unveiling of wickedness that was to usher in the end. No earthly power will ever be permitted either to crush Israel utterly or to restore Israel fully. Not only is Israel especially the care of the Lord Himself, but angelic ministry has been their portion all the time they have been in favour. Daniel and his believing people would be comforted as they looked back over the past. Not all the might of Pharaoh could save his firstborn; neither could the boastful Assyrian host save themselves from the destruction that came from the Angel of the Lord. Jericho's walls fell flat without the aid of either a battering ram or soldier, and the Red Sea stood as a wall at the word of the Lord. It is perfectly fitting that the grand sequel to Daniel, namely, the book of the Revelation, should be filled with angelic powers, some for and some against the Lord and His people.

**Egypt, Syria, and the man of sin (Dan. 11)**

We now approach what is perhaps the most difficult and intricate chapter in prophecy, viz., Daniel 11. One of the chief elements of difficulty is due to the blending together of type and antitype and of history and prophecy. The problem is to determine the point at which the division occurs, to find the verse at which we may say, Here history ceases and prophecy begins. Chapter 11 contains a number of sections which we set out below for the clearer understanding of our problem:

1. 2-4. Persian and Greek kings, ending in the 'mighty king', Alexander the Great.
2. 5-9. The division of Alexander's empire among his generals. The introduction of two kings named the 'king of the north' and the 'king of the south'.
3. 10-20. The alternating histories and policies of these kings of the north and south.
Chapter 4

The first section of this prophecy (verse 2-4) establishes a link with earlier visions, and particularly with that of chapter 8. So that, although we have already considered this chapter, we must go back to it here, in order to establish the close association that is intended between the history of Persia, and Greece, and the future antichristian king:

The **Ram** of Daniel 8:3 is interpreted as being Media and Persia (8:20).

The **He Goat** of Daniel 8:5 is interpreted as being the king of Greece (8:21).

The **Great Horn** between the eyes of the he goat represents the first king of Greece, and the **Four Notable Ones** that arose toward the four winds of heaven, are interpreted as four kingdoms that shall stand up in his stead (8:21,22).

The angelic interpreter of Daniel 11 makes a fuller reference to these two great powers. We now learn that there were to stand up three kings in Persia, and that the fourth, richer than they all, would by his strength through his riches stir up all against the realm of Greece. Alexander is spoken of as a mighty king who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will, whose kingdom shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven. So far, the chapters are parallel. Returning, however, to Daniel 8 we find that here we immediately leave the fourfold subdivision of Alexander's kingdom for a consideration of the yet future dominion of the beast of the Apocalypse:

'And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land' (Dan. 8:9).

This passage is interpreted in Daniel 8:23-25 as follows:
'And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are
come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding
dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but
not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall
prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy
people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper
in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace
shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of
princes; but he shall be broken without hand'.

It will be seen that in Daniel 8 no record is given of the
history that intervenes between the break-up of the
kingdom of Alexander and the advent of the antichristian
king. This has an important bearing upon the
interpretation of Daniel 11, for the prophecies concerning
the kings of the south and north in 11:10-20 are usually
interpreted as being fulfilled in the doings of Ptolemy I.,
II., III., IV., V., and VI., of Seleucus I., II., III. and IV., and
of Antiochus II., III. and IV. Instead of commencing
future prophecy at 11:21, however, we follow the lead of
Daniel 8:23 and the explicit statement of Daniel 10:14
(viz., that the revelation of Dan. 11 and 12 concerns Israel
'in the latter days'), and commence the prophetic and
future section of Daniel 11 at verse 5, seeing in the
activities of Ptolemy and Antiochus foreshadowings only
and not fulfilments of the earlier verses.

Before proceeding further, it will be helpful to see the
whole prophecy set out before us. The subject-matter is,
of course, too vast and too involved for us to attempt to
include every member, or to account for every detail. All
we can do is to point out the most obvious features, leaving
the reader the difficult but joyous task of seeking fuller
details for himself.
Daniel 11:3 to 12:3

A1 11:3. A king. He shall do according to his will.
B1 11:6. The king’s daughter.
C1 11:7-10. In his estate.
D1 11:14. They shall fall.
A2 11:16. A king. He shall do according to his will.
D2 11:35. Some shall fall.
E 11:21-34. The vile person.—
In his estate.

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A3 11:36. A king. He shall do according to his will.
B3 11:37. The desire of women.
C3 11:38. In his estate.

We have only to look at this outline to perceive the unity of the prophecy, despite its involved character. At the time of the end there shall be a king who shall do according to his will. And not only is this king foreshadowed by Alexander the Great (11:3), but the doings of Alexander’s successors also foreshadow yet future history leading up to the manifestation of the man of sin. Moreover, the strange break in the structure, occasioned by the introduction of the vile person and the setting up of the ‘abomination that maketh desolate’, warns
us to keep distinct the two important figures of prophecy, the beast and the false prophet.

We must go back to ancient history to discover the kingdoms associated with the rise of the man of sin. At Alexander's death, his kingdom was divided among his four generals as follows:

(1) Ptolemy took Egypt and Palestine.
(2) Seleucus took Northern Syria.
(3) Cassander took Macedonia and Thrace.
(4) Lysimachus took Asia Minor.

It will be noticed that Daniel 11:5 assumes that we shall recognize the identity of the king of the south, and verse 6 speaks familiarly of the king of the north. We have been prepared for some such terms as these by Daniel 8:8, where the fourfold division of Alexander's kingdom is said to be towards the four winds of heaven. In agreement with this, we find in Daniel 7:2,3:

"Four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another."

It is impossible for us at the present time to say which of the four successors of Daniel 7:4-8 is the lion with eagle's wings, or which is the bear or the leopard or the monster. But that they speak of the future resuscitation of these four kingdoms is a matter beyond doubt. Taking everything into account we learn from scriptural prophecy to watch closely the 'north' and the 'south' kingdoms — northern Syria and Egypt. The wars and the policies that have been connected with these two powers in the past but foreshadow the 'Eastern Question' of the time of the end. The endeavour to promote alliances by marriages such as that of Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II. to Antiochus II.; or of Cleopatra to Ptolemy V., will again be attempted but prove futile. In this connection the structure proves of great value, for it reveals the fact that the final antichristian king will be proof against such allurements. This may, at first, seem strange, but it is in keeping with the doctrines
of demons exposed in 1 Timothy 4, which will include ‘forbidding to marry’.

It will be seen from the structure that the words, ‘in his estate’ occur four times. The Hebrew word 
ken means a base (as in 1 Kings 7:31), and in the first three references of Daniel 11 in the LXX. is translated by the word 
etoimasia, ‘a preparation’. The latter is used in the New Testament of the work of a forerunner. Does this not seem to indicate that Satan, ignorant of the ‘times and the seasons’ which the Father has kept in His own power, is perpetually ‘prepared’ with his man. Here, in Daniel 11, we have several kings in readiness, should the end have come. To this principle may be ascribed the close likeness which some outstanding characters in history have had to the prophetic picture. Quite a number of prophetic students believed that Napoleon was the man of sin. More recently Mussolini has been named. There may be many more, but at the end, Satan will be prepared with his man.

It would appear from Daniel 11 that towards the time of the end, and arising out of either Syria or Egypt, there will be several very marked anticipations of the man of sin. The description of the first abortive attempt is given in Daniel 11:7-19, where we read of war between the kings of the north and south, and of an unsuccessful attempt to make Judaea independent, and so to ‘establish the vision’. The verse concerned in the latter phrase needs some revision. The words, ‘the robbers of thy people’ (Dan. 11:14) may mean ‘the violent ones among thy people’. These would be revolutionists who would league themselves with an apostate power to gain their own ends. They shall fail, however, for God alone is able to restore Israel to their land.

While Babylon and Nineveh have passed away, Egypt, Greece and Persia remain to this day, and it is from among these kingdoms that the last great oppressor shall arise.
Time would fail us in the attempt to deal with the details of this chapter, but perhaps the following analysis may be of help.

**Main features of the future**

**Daniel 11:5**

A prince originating in Egypt possesses a great dominion. When this development in the near east takes shape — 'Know that summer is nigh'.

**Daniel 11:6**

A marriage alliance between Egypt and Syria for the purpose of making 'an agreement' proves a failure.

**Daniel 11:7-19**

Conflicts between these two kingdoms will result in dire trouble in the 'glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed' (11:16) and end in a 'staggering' defeat (11:19).

**Daniel 11:20**

Satan's attempt proving abortive, 'in his estate' a raiser of taxes arises, who shall exact heavy tribute from Israel and the land of Palestine. His end shall be sudden and mysterious: 'within a few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle'.

**Daniel 11:21-35**

Still undismayed, Satan causes to stand up 'in his estate' one who is described as a 'vile person'. This one, instead of devastating the land, 'comes in peaceably', and 'obtains the kingdom by flatteries'. 'After the league made with him he shall work deceitfully with a small people; he shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places'. After stirring up strife against the king of the south, and apparently involving more than one king (11:27), he returns to his land with great riches, and at length
manifests his true intent: 'His heart shall be against the holy covenant' (11:28). This covenant is referred to in Daniel 9:27: 'He shall confirm the covenant with many for one seven'. In the midst of the seven years he breaks the covenant, causing sacrifice and offering to cease, 'and in its stead (see note of The Companion Bible on Dan. 9:27) the abomination that maketh desolate'.

So, from Daniel 11:28 onwards, he has indignation against the holy covenant, and seeks out those who 'forsake the holy covenant' so that he might break it. They 'pollute the sanctuary' (11:31), 'take away the daily sacrifice' which had been restored under the terms of the seven years' covenant with Israel, and place in the temple 'the abomination that maketh desolate' (11:31). Those who have become apostate he will corrupt with flatteries, but those who know their God shall be strong and do exploits.

It is necessary to distinguish between the antichrist and the beast. The antichrist is the vile person (foreshadowed by Herod in Acts 12) who has to do with Israel, and the breaking of the covenant. The beast is a vast political power, with whom the antichrist works, as Herod worked with Rome. Antichrist is not mentioned in the Revelation; his characteristics are given in the first epistle of John. His sphere is a religious one; that of the beast is more political.

Daniel 11:36-38

The way being prepared by the vile person in the breaking of the covenant, the wilful king of Daniel 11:36 arises. He is the king described in Revelation 13, whose sway is not for the whole seven years, but, as Revelation 13:5 shows, for the last three years and a half:

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* The time that elapses from the making of the covenant to verse 31 is 3 and a half years. The career of blasphemy of verses 36-45 occupies the other 3 and a half years of the last seven of Daniel 9.
'And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished' (Dan. 11:36).

A reference to 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 and Revelation 13:5-7 will remove any doubt that this wilful king of Daniel 11:36 is the man of sin himself. While Daniel 11:36,37 states that this king shall magnify himself above every god, verse 38 declares that he shall, 'in his estate', honour a strange god, a god of forces, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory. This 'strange god' is none other than Satan himself. When the Lord Jesus was tempted in the wilderness Satan offered him all the kingdoms of the world, for an act of worship. The beast of Revelation 13 not only received worship and sat on the dragon's throne, but we read that 'they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?' He honours a 'god of forces' (Heb. fortresses), and has dealings 'in the inmost strongholds of a strange god', so that the cry is raised, 'Who is able to make war with him?'

Attacked by the kings of the south and the north, he shall repulse them, and enter into 'the glorious land', over-throwing many countries. While in the Holy land unpleasant tidings from the east and north trouble him, and he vents his fury upon many. He plants his tent between the seas (i.e., the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, the extent of Israel's land being 'from sea to sea'), and so attempts a further usurpation of the Messiah's glory. Yet he shall come to his end and none shall help him. Other Scriptures make it plain that this mighty king is smitten of God, e.g., 'He shall smite the earth ("earth" is erets; some readings give arits "the oppressor") with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked' (Isa. 11:4). To the same effect is the statement in 2 Thessalonians 2:8.
This brings us to the rising up of Michael, the great tribulation, and the resurrection detailed in Daniel 12:1-3. We desire to impress upon the reader that it is an integral part of the prophecy of Daniel 11. The epilogue of the whole book begins at Daniel 12:4.

Let us remind ourselves of the importance of the association between the prophecies of the four chapters — 7, 8, 9, and 11. They may be visualised as follows:

Daniel 7

Four beasts. One having ten horns, and developing the man of sin. Destroyed by the Lord Himself.

Daniel 8

Four kingdoms develop out of Greece. The king of fierce countenance arises from one of these. He is characterized by blasphemy and craft, and he shall be broken without hand.

Daniel 9

At the time of the end, a covenant shall be made with Israel for seven years. This shall be broken in the midst, being followed by the placing of the abomination in the holy place.

Daniel 11

This chapter associates the four divisions of Alexander’s kingdom with the vile person, who breaks the covenant and sets up the abomination, and the wilful king, who comes to his end at the hand of the Lord ‘in the glorious holy mountain’.

Michael, tribulation and resurrection

The opening verses of Daniel 12 belong to the prophecy of Daniel 11, and must not be confused with the epilogue of the book which begins at verse 4.
Our study of the eleventh chapter brought us to the period covered by the last ‘week’ of Daniel 9, and the doings of the ‘vile person’ and the ‘wifful king’:

‘At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever’ (Dan. 12:1-3).

The statements in these verses are so definite and are quoted so clearly in other parts of Scripture that there is no difficulty in distinguishing the events which will occur at the time of the end. Let us tabulate them:

(1) The end of the ‘warfare great’, that eventuates in the destruction of the man of sin, is signalized by the standing up of Michael. We are told in Jude 9 that Michael is the Archangel, and in Daniel 12:1 that he stands for the people of Israel.

(2) When Michael stands up, two unparalleled events take place:
   (a) A time of trouble greater than any other, either before or since.
   (b) A resurrection of the dead.

It is unnecessary to prove that there can be but one such time of trouble, and that if we read elsewhere of an un-paralleled tribulation it must refer to the same period. Such a reference occurs in Matthew 24:15-21:

‘When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place ... flee ... for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be’.

When studying Daniel 11, we were directed to 2 Thessalonians 2 for light upon the subject of the ‘wifful king’. Now the two epistles addressed to the church at Thessalonica deal with the same theme, the second epistle correcting some misinterpretations of the first. And as we
were directed to the second epistle by Daniel 11, so we are directed to the first by Daniel 12:

'For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God' (1 Thess. 4:16).

The presence of Michael the Archangel is always associated with resurrection (Dan. 12:1; 1 Thess. 4:16; Jude 9) or spiritual war (Dan. 10:13; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7). It is utterly impossible to read into any of these passages the hope of the church of the mystery. The Thessalonians knew nothing of such a company, but were clearly told that they belonged to that part of God's purpose connected with the rise of the man of sin. Matthew 24, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians are intimately connected. Michael stands for Israel. Years after he had written 1 Thessalonians 4:16 Paul could say, 'For the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain' (Acts 28:20). The hope entertained throughout the period covered by the Acts is this hope of Israel.

'Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.'—This is a simple yet full statement, for it includes the whole doctrine of the state of the dead, and the nature of the resurrection. Death is called a 'sleep', a term that belongs to both Old and New Testaments, and is found in both the Gospels and the Epistles. This sleep is 'in the dust of the earth', a statement void of meaning if the dead are at the same time fully awake in Paradise. Resurrection is the awakening of the sleeper, as in Ephesians 5:14. Comment on these questions would be quite unnecessary if unscriptural doctrines arising out of the idea of the natural immortality of the soul had not darkened the truth of God.

The margin of The Companion Bible draws attention to the need for care in handling the verse we are considering. Dr. S. P. Tregelles gives the following translation, which he justifies:

'And many from among the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake: these shall be unto everlasting life; but those (the rest of the sleepers, who do not awake at this time) shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt'.
'It is clearly not a general resurrection; it is "many from among"; and it is only by taking the words in this sense, that we gain any information as to what becomes of those who continue to sleep in the dust of the earth'.

The word translated here 'contempt' is found again in Isaiah 66:23,24, where it is translated 'abhoring':

'And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another ... shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the LORD. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhoring unto all flesh'.

These two prophecies are parallel; Daniel 12:2 is to be explained in the light of Isaiah 66:24 and vice versa.

Reverting to the great tribulation of Daniel 12:1, we observe that:

'At that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book'.

If we turn to 1 and 2 Thessalonians we shall not only read of the man of sin and his destruction, and of that resurrection which is associated with the Lord's coming and the Archangel, but we shall also see the parallel to the deliverance of Daniel 12:1:

'And to wait for His Son from heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivers us from the wrath to come (that is coming)' (1 Thess. 1:10).

Jeremiah 30:7 says of this same period:

'Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it'.

The reader may remember that in the structure of the whole book, given on page 44, the deliverance of Daniel from the den of lions is placed as an historic foreshadowing of this greater and future deliverance:

'And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever' (Dan. 12:3).
The glories of heaven, and of the risen saints, whatever their sphere of blessing, are invariably described in terms of brightness. The particular word used here is zohar, which occurs only once elsewhere:

‘Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber’ (Ezek. 8:2).

Daniel had felt all his comeliness turn to corruption at the appearance of the heavenly vision recorded in Daniel 10, but in resurrection glory, both Daniel and those who shall stand with him, will themselves ‘shine as the brightness of the firmament’.

There is a special place given here to those who shall remain faithful in the fiercest days of antichristian persecution. In Daniel 11:30-35, where the holy covenant is forsaken and the abomination set up, the people are sharply divided into two classes:

(1) ‘Such as do wickedly against the covenant’.
(2) ‘The people that do know their God’.

These two classes seem to be again in mind in Daniel 12:2. ‘These’, the first class, shall awake to everlasting life; ‘those’, the second class, to shame and everlasting contempt.

The first class is further sub-divided: ‘They that understand among the people shall instruct many’ (Dan. 11:33). It is clear from verses 33 to 35 that this instruction will be given at a time of fierce trial. It will not then be a conventional activity; it will be accomplished at the risk of life itself.

Those that awake unto everlasting life will, similarly differ in degrees of glory. All in this company will attain to hayi olam, ‘age-life’, but some among them will shine as the firmament and as the stars. And, as 1 Corinthians 15 shows, ‘one star differs from another star in glory’.
Here, then, is the end of 'warfare great', an end that God alone could foreshadow or achieve. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning'. Here, too, is the end of Daniel's prophecy. The remaining verses of the chapter are in the form of an epilogue which, while containing matter of importance and giving further light upon some of the details, does not include any further prophetic event. With this epilogue we must conclude the present studies in the book of Daniel.

The epilogue (Dan. 12:4-13)

The epilogue of the prophecy of Daniel occupies Daniel 12:4-13. Before setting out the structure of this closing section, attention must be drawn to alternative readings of verse 4: 'Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased'. The word translated 'run to and fro' is the Hebrew shut, which occurs in Amos 8:12:

'And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it'.

Daniel 12:4 of Swete's edition of the LXX. reads here: heos an apomanosin, which means: 'till many shall have gone raving mad'. The Companion Bible margin says that with the change of the word from shut to sut (which does not remove any letter of the original text but only a point added by the Massoretic scribes), the word there means to revolt or apostatize. Further, in the clause 'knowledge shall be increased' Dr. Ginsburg suggests that hadda’ath should read hara’oth, which changes the word 'knowledge' to 'wickedness'. The Septuagint translation does not decide the question, for while Theodotion's version renders the word by gnosis, Swete's edition (A) reads adikias ('wickedness'), showing that from very early times the reading was questioned. The reading that we have adopted is the one suggested by Ginsburg and by the editions of the Septuagint mentioned, namely:

'Many shall apostatize, and wickedness shall be increased'.
With this explanation we now proceed to the structure of the epilogue.

**Daniel 12:4-13**

A 12:4. Shut up the words, and seal the book.

B 12:4. a Many shall apostatize.

b Wickedness shall be increased.

C 12:5-7. The three and half years.

D 12:8. What shall be the end?

A 12:9. The words are closed and sealed.

B 12:10. a Many shall be purified.

b The wicked shall do wickedly.

C 12:11,12. Two periods beyond the three and half years.

D 12:13. Thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end.

The first item that demands attention in this epilogue is the double statement concerning the shutting up and sealing of the book:

‘Shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end’ (Dan. 12:4).

‘The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end’ (Dan. 12:9).

These words have been variously interpreted. Some think they refer to the official seal being set upon the whole book of Daniel at its completion, guaranteeing it to be authentic and canonical. This view does not seem tenable in the light of the added words: ‘even to the time of the end’, and ‘till the time of the end’. Another view is that the prophetic utterances found in Daniel are only to be fully understood in the light of the Book of the Revelation. This is nearer to the truth, but not quite, for it looks to the Lord’s people instead of the Lord Himself. We believe the shut book will be opened together with its seals ‘at the time of the end’ by the Lord Himself, as so graphically stated in Revelation 5 and 6:

‘And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals, ... the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose (open) the seven seals thereof’ (Rev. 5:1,5).
THE EPILOGUE (Dan. 12:4-13)

The opening of the seals is described in Revelation 6, which sets forth the features of the time of the end already prophesied in Daniel and by the Lord Himself in Matthew 24:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revelation 6</th>
<th>Matthew 24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The WHITE horse.</td>
<td>False christ's.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The RED horse.</td>
<td>Wars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The BLACK horse.</td>
<td>Famines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The PALE horse.</td>
<td>Pestilences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'All these are the beginning of sorrows'.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The martyrs.</td>
<td>The martyrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs in heaven.</td>
<td>Signs in heaven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'The day of wrath come'.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

That Matthew 24 speaks of the same prophetic period as does Daniel, verses 15-21 make quite clear:

'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place ... then shall be great tribulation' (Matt. 24:15-21).

'There shall be a time of trouble ... the abomination that maketh desolate set up' (Dan. 12:1,11).

The closing of the book, moreover, has a significance that is made clear by a reference to Luke 4:16-21. There the Lord read a portion of the prophecy of Isaiah, ceased half way through a verse, closed the book and said: 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears'. Upon examination it will be seen that the Lord ended His reading at the words: 'the acceptable year of the Lord'. Had He read on and included the words: 'the day of vengeance of our God', He could not have said: 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled', because two distinct dispensations would have been confused, the one of mercy and the other of wrath. The closed book in Luke 4 and in Daniel 12 indicates that an interval must be allowed, and that the prophetic visions of Daniel belong to the yet future, rather than to the time when grace is calling out a church from among Jew and Gentile.
The time periods of this closing section are complicated. We have already explained the meaning of the words: 'A time, times and half a time', as being the period of three and a half years which runs from the setting up of the abomination 'in the midst of the week' (Dan. 9:27) until the 'end'. The end deals with the destruction of the desolator, but for those who are saved and await the glory of the Lord, there are two short preparatory periods to intervene. The first is the 1290 days, and the second the 1335 days. Now three and a half years are 1260 days, so that we have two periods extending beyond the close of Daniel's seventieth week.

Israel are to repent, look upon Him Whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him (Zech. 12:10-14), and it will be remembered that Aaron and Moses were both mourned by Israel for a period of thirty days (Num. 20:29; Deut. 34:8). Blessed is he that comes to the 1290 days, for mourning shall then have passed away. The remaining forty-five days that end with the close of the 1335 days may well be occupied in the returning of the dispersion from among the Gentiles. *The Companion Bible* suggests that the Psalms that bear these numbers, namely, 30, 45 and 75 have an intended connection with this period. Certainly the sentiment of these Psalms is appropriate to the time whether their numeration be intended or not. This the reader can test for himself.

The prophet Daniel appears to have been reluctant to withdraw, and twice the heavenly visitor says to him: 'Go thy way'. To none is it permitted to receive all the truth, or to understand it all. Daniel's work was done, and he is directed to go his way, and rest when his time shall have come, in the sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection. The callings and the spheres of blessing may differ as much as the earth differs from the heavens, but one feature is constant, and that is that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and corruption cannot inherit incorruption. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, whether our hope be with Daniel in his lot,
with the Bride in the New Jerusalem, or with the Church at
the right hand of God.

From one end of the book to the other one consistent
theme is found. The first unfolding shows Gentile
dominion from its inception to its destruction, and in the
prophetic visions that follow, attention is concentrated
upon the 'end', the period indicated by the feet and ten toes
of the image, 'the days of those kings' the ten horns of
the later visions. While the prophetic vision sweeps the
centuries, and comprehends the rise and fall of dynasty and
nation, the attention is focussed upon the prophetic period
of 490 years, and of that the final seven covers the bulk of
the prophecy.

We named these studies: 'The testimony of Daniel or
The time of the end', for it is the time of the end that is the
dominant factor. The only possible solution of the troubles
of Israel and of all the earth is the coming again of their
rejected King. Instead of 'civilization' growing and
developing until it ushers in the kingdom of God, we find
it smashed to atoms before the true kingdom can be
set up. Instead of faith and knowledge increasing and
righteousness covering the earth, we find wickedness
increasing until it rivals the days of Noah. Instead of
'peace and safety', the astonished prophet learns of
'warfare great'. 'There is, however, a day coming when it
shall be said:

'Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye
comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her WARFARE is
accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received
of the LORD'S hand double for all her sins' (Isa. 40:1,2).
For studies that will help to fill out much that is lacking in this exposition of Daniel, the reader should consult:

*An Alphabetical Analysis — Parts 8 and 9*

*Parable, Miracle and Sign*

*The Burden of Prophecy*

*The Signs of the Times*

*The Eastern Question,*

by the same author and publisher.
This Prophecy

CHAPTER 1

The Relation of the Book to the rest of the Bible and as a whole

Much of the failure to understand the Scriptures arises from the fact that we approach its pages thinking that we have to explain the Bible, instead of realizing that the Bible has been written to explain things to us. Further, we approach the various books of the Bible as though they had no connection with the rest of Scripture, and thereby fail to perceive the beautiful design running through the entire Word. In approaching the book of the Revelation it is of the utmost importance to notice its place in the canon of Scripture, and the relation which it holds to the remainder of the inspired Word. The simplest and at the same time the most obvious relation is the connection of this last book with the first, namely, Genesis.

*Genesis* tells us of the creation, the Serpent’s deception, the loss of Paradise, the forfeiture of the right to the tree of life, the entrance of sin, death, and the curse. *Revelation* tells us of the new creation, the end of the Serpent’s deception, the restoration of Paradise, the right to the tree of life, and the blessed fact that there shall be ‘no more death’, and ‘no more curse’. The third chapter of Genesis contains in a brief statement the great prophecy concerning the Seed of the woman, and the seed of the Serpent. Revelation shows us in fuller detail the final and complete fulfilment of this basic prophecy.

Coming to the New Testament, we find in the opening book, the Gospel of Matthew, a striking and obvious connection between this Gospel of the Kingdom, and the Revelation. Matthew presents us with the coming of the ‘Son of man’ in lowliness, finally showing us His rejection by Israel as their King, His head crowned with thorns, and
the Gentile successor of Nebuchadnezzar’s dominion preferred to the King of God’s appointment.

The Revelation has an answer to this, just as it had an answer to all that was said in Genesis. In the Revelation the Lord is seen coming again, still as the Son of Man, this time in great glory, this time crowned with many crowns, this time to enter into His place as heaven’s appointed King to rule with a rod of iron, to overthrow the final blasphemous development of Gentile dominion, and to usher in that perfect kingdom concerning which all the prophets had spoken.

In studying the teaching of the New Testament books, a great deal can be gathered from the way in which they use the Old Testament Scriptures. When we find that Matthew refers to the Old Testament Scriptures about 92 times, and that the epistle to the Hebrews contains in its short compass 102 Old Testament references, we are at once impressed with the fact that these books contain some line of teaching which has a real connection with the purpose and people of Old Testament times. When we consider the Prison Epistles*, and note how very few references they contain to the Old Testament, we are at once in possession of that which helps us to see that these epistles are not the continuation of the teaching of the Old Testament, but they are a revelation of something new, even as they themselves claim (see Eph. 3).

What shall we say then when we find no less than 285 references to the Old Testament in the book of the Revelation, or more than the references of Matthew and Hebrews put together? Surely this is a witness which must not be overlooked. Further, the visions, the symbols, the general character of the language of the Revelation are similar to those of Daniel, Zechariah, Joel, and the Old Testament prophets generally. If we approach the Revelation with a mind stored with the teaching of the prophets of old, we shall not need explanations of much

* Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 2 Timothy, Philemon.
that otherwise would mystify us, and shall be spared the utterly vain attempt to find an explanation by ransacking the history of Europe to get something approaching to an interpretation.

For some years past we have been forced to the belief that the Bible explains itself, and that all necessary information is found within its pages. If the child of God must possess a knowledge of the acts of Goths and Vandals, and of the tortuous intricacies of European and Roman history before he can understand this book, then but a very few can possibly hope to acquire sufficient data even to commence the study. This shuts us up to the few whose opportunities for research have been more advantageous than the majority, and finally calls us to rest upon the conflicting findings of these frail and erring teachers, fallible as ourselves. No, this is not the case at all. The simplest believer who may never have heard of Caligula, nor of Alaric, to whom such phrases as 'political heavens' and 'ecclesiastical suns' may be utterly unintelligible, may nevertheless understand all the mind of God as revealed in this book without one single additional outside or historic allusion. Revelation studied in the light of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, Zechariah and Malachi is luminous, and in turn reflects light on some otherwise difficult passages in those prophecies.

As we read the Old Testament prophecies written before the captivity, and those written during and after the captivity, we shall find a marked change. Ezekiel's prophecy is full of symbols, so also is Daniel's; Zechariah devotes six chapters to symbols. This change, this important place given to symbols, is worthy of notice. During the time of Israel's decline and failure, symbolic prophecy is in the ascendant. When we come to the Revelation we find these symbols referred to as 'mysteries' e.g., 'the mystery of the seven stars' (Rev. 1:20). Mystery first appears on the page of Scripture in Matthew 13, when Christ, as Israel's King, had been rejected by the nation (see Matt. 12). It was because of this that He spoke in
parables, and it is because Revelation deals with this same people, their final trouble and restoration, that we have so many signs or symbols in it. It is not until the seventh angel sounds his trumpet that:

‘... the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets ... And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever (unto the ages of the ages)’ (Rev. 10:7 and 11:15).

Many opponents of the inspiration of the book of the Revelation have brought forward, among other arguments, the style and language of the book. One need not have a learned acquaintance with classical Greek to be able to point out many departures from recognized rules of syntax which are to be found in the Revelation. What is important to observe is that these departures from pure Greek are not ‘barbarisms’, as Dionysius Alexandrinus called them, but are to be traced to the strong Hebrew current of theme and style running through this prophecy. The imagery of the book is peculiarly Jewish throughout; temple, tabernacle, ark, manna, covenant, altar, incense, priesthood, the rod of iron, the holy city New Jerusalem, Jezebel, Balaam, Sodom, Egypt, the plagues so closely parallel to those of Exodus, all these figure largely in the Revelation. The vision of the four horses of Revelation 6, and the two witnesses of Revelation 11, are direct references and continuations of the same visions and prophecies of Zechariah. The angel of Revelation 10:5,6, is a direct reference to Daniel 12:7; while the opening vision of the Son of man in the first chapter is parallel to that of Daniel 10. Surely none has any hesitation in believing that Daniel and Zechariah prophesied concerning the future of Israel and Jerusalem?

It has been pointed out already by others that the titles of Christ used in this book link the Lord to the earthly kingdom purpose, and not to the church of the mystery revealed in Ephesians 3. The student is recommended to make a list of these titles. He is called,
The Son of man;
The Almighty;
The Lord God;
The First and Last;
The Prince of the kings of the earth;
The One Who is to come;
The One Who liveth;
The Lamb;
The Lion of the tribe of Judah;
The Morning Star;
The Root and Offspring of David;
He Who has the Key of David.

Let us now look at the book as a whole, in order to gain a large and comprehensive understanding of its purport. This will not only teach us what the book is about, but will act as a corrective when looking at details and smaller passages. Let it be remembered that no one verse or passage must be so interpreted that it goes beyond the scope of the book as a whole, oversteps its place in relation to the rest of Scripture, or isolates it from the divine plan observable throughout the inspired record.

To illustrate our meaning. A verse taken by itself may refer to the Reformation, to Constantine, to the early Church, or to Rome, etc., but its context may demand that it refers to Antichrist, Israel, Babylon, Jerusalem, etc., and however much the isolated passage may seem to fit the historical reference, that will be only a superficial agreement, and must be rejected if it runs counter to the unity of purpose exhibited in the book as a whole. Therefore, before we venture a consideration of the first chapter, or a theory as to the ‘seven churches’, or ‘the woman clothed with the sun’, etc., we will look at the book as a whole.

Different arrangements of the book have been given by various writers, but none seem to commend themselves to us so much as that of the late Dr. E.W. Bullinger, where the structural indications in the book itself have been diligently followed and tabulated, thereby discovering the
Spirit's own arrangement, rather than inventing one of man's own. This being the case, we have no hesitation in presenting it before the reader, feeling that although Dr. Bullinger is the honoured instrument, the structure itself is that of the Lord, the Inspire of the Apocalypse. It will be found that while retaining the divisions as given by the Doctor, we have departed at times from his words of explanation.

The Revelation as a whole


C1 a 4 and 5. In heaven.— The throne, the book, the Lamb, living ones, all creation.
b 6:1 to 7:8. On earth.— The six seals. The 144,000 of the children of Israel.

C2 a 7:9 to 8:6. In heaven.— The great multitude and the seventh seal.
b 8:7 to 11:14. On earth.— The sounding of the six trumpets.

C3 a 11:15-19. In heaven.— The sounding of the seventh trumpet. The kingdom.
b 11:19. On earth.— The earthquake, etc.

b 12:13 to 13:18. On earth.— The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

C5 a 14:1-5. In heaven.— The Lamb and 144,000.
b 14:6-20. On earth.— The six angels.

C6 a 15:1-8. In heaven.— The seven angels with vials.
b 16:1 to 18:24. On earth.— The seven vials.

b 19:17 to 20:15. On earth.— The final judgment and millennial reign.


This survey presents to the eye the whole book, and demonstrates at a glance the fact that the central member, C, is indeed not only central in position, but is the pivot or platform of the whole. The sevenfold division of visions is of great importance, the whole series being found in pairs, that which takes place upon the earth being the result of that which has taken place in heaven. It will be observed that the seven assemblies are brought into direct line with the new heavens and earth, and the new Jerusalem, and that one theme runs throughout the entire book.
CHAPTER 2
The Introduction
Revelation 1:1-4

The introduction to the Apocalypse occupies not the first chapter, as some have been led to think, but the first three verses and part of the fourth of the first chapter. These verses contain much that is of service to us in the understanding of the rest of the book, inasmuch as they give such important items as the theme, agents, means, recipients, and time during and by which the things herein revealed shall come to pass.

The theme of the book is introduced into the first sentence. It is the revelation of Jesus Christ. The word translated 'revelation' is apokalupsis, and means 'an unveiling'. The usage of this word in other Scriptures lends great weight to the teaching that we have in this title, which is pre-eminently the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ in Person.

'The manifestation of the sons of God' (Rom. 8:19).
'Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. 1:7).
'When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven' (2 Thess. 1:7).
'Might be found unto praise and honour and glory at (the) appearing of Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. 1:7).
'At the revelation of Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. 1:13).
'When His glory shall be revealed' (1 Pet. 4:13).

These passages are sufficient to show that Scripture has already fixed the meaning of the word apocalypse as having direct reference to the visible appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that this constituted the hope of God's believing people during the time covered by the Acts, and even afterward, as expressed by Peter's epistle. As we proceed we shall find that all which is written prior to Revelation 19:11 is introductory to the great theme of the book. There in chapter 19 is at length described the apocalypse, in view of which all the rest of the book is written. In the book of the Revelation, however, that
which is yet future history is brought before the apostle in vision, consequently the next clause tells us how this revelation was shown to John before its actual fulfilment in fact. ‘God gave it unto Him to shew unto His servants’. The word ‘show’ is of importance. It is often used in connection with showing by means of signs. Its first occurrence in the New Testament is not only indicative of this meaning, but opens up to the mind many lines of thought in relation to the special aspect of Matthew and the Revelation considered together:

‘Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them’ (Matt. 4:8).

That which the Lord Jesus refused to take at the hand of the prince of this world, He will receive in the appointed time from the hand of the Father, for a day is coming when the words shall echo through the spaces of heaven and earth:

‘The kingdoms of this world (same as Matt. 4:8) are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ’ (Rev. 11:15).

The use of the word ‘show’ in the Revelation itself will give us its meaning more clearly than any other explanation.

Show (deiknuo)

A 1:1. The revelation shown by the angel. In promise.
  C 17:1. The whore (Note seven vials, and ‘he carried me away in the spirit’).
    D 21:9. The bride (Note seven vials, and ‘he carried me away in the spirit’).
    C 21:10. The city descending out of heaven from God.
    D 22:1. The river proceeding out of the throne of God.
A 22:6. Things shown by the angel.
B 22:8. The angel who showed the things refusing worship.

The things shown to us by John in this book are further said to be ‘things which must come to pass with speed’.
The words are a direct reference to Daniel 2:29, and we would here emphasize with all the power we may possess, the utter impossibility of understanding or appreciating either the message, or the means used to convey that message in this book, without a fairly comprehensive knowledge of the Old Testament prophecies. Not only Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but Daniel and the so-called Minor Prophets need careful study. How many there are who fail to understand the book of the Revelation, who never blame themselves for ignoring the first commentaries ever written, namely, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zechariah, Haggai, Zephaniah and Malachi! The statement as to the speedy fulfilment of these things shown is again emphasized in verse 3, 'for the time is near'. No amount of reasoning can make this speedy fulfilment the well-nigh two thousand years which have intervened between the uttering of these words and their then distant accomplishment.

The words 'with speed' and 'is near' were not written from the standpoint of A.D. 96, but from the standpoint from which the visions were seen, that is, The Day of the Lord. Time will then be shortened for the elect's sake, the final seven years of Daniel 9 will quickly run their course, and the Lord will rend the heavens and come down. The reference to such passages as 2 Peter 3:8 is a gloss invented to explain away the apparent difficulty, a difficulty which vanishes by adjusting the viewpoint to the time when the visions were seen and the words heard. This urgent note is repeated in the messages to the seven assemblies, 'Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly' (Rev. 2:16), 'Behold, I come quickly' (3:11). The same meaning must be given here as to the words in Revelation 11:14. The book closes with repeated emphasis upon the nearness of the Lord's coming (Rev. 22:7,12,20), and helps us to see that the whole book is written from the future standpoint of the Day of the Lord, and has no historic or prophetic reference to the course of events which have transpired during the interval filled by the dispensation of the Mystery, or of the church in its wider aspect.
The word ‘signified’ in the first verse, as the English word suggests, is derived from the word ‘sign’; or ‘symbol’, and indicates that in the book of the Revelation we are to have described and explained a prophecy which was made known to John by an angel through the medium of a series of signs or symbols. The word *semaino*, ‘to signify’ (from *smeion*, ‘a sign’), occurs only six times in the New Testament. John 12:33, 18:32, and 21:19 have reference to symbolic words. In Acts 11:28 Agabus signified by the Spirit that there should be a dearth. How he did it we are not told, but the manner in which he prophesied the bondage of Paul in Acts 21:11 by a sign may suggest his method in Acts 11. The only other reference is Acts 25:27.

The introduction of the angel in the opening verse is important. This angel does not leave the apostle until the last chapter is reached. The first six chapters of Zechariah afford a striking parallel. Angels figure largely in Israel’s history. They are found with Abraham (Heb. 13:2), they were connected with the giving of the law (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19). They are prominent in the Gospels and the Acts. They figure prominently in the Second Coming of the Lord (Matt. 16:27; 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:16, and 2 Thess. 1:7), and the Epistle to the Hebrews contains twelve references to them. The Revelation contains more than seventy references to angels, linking the book with Israel and the earthly kingdom, and severing it from the church which is the Body by the fact that in the Prison Epistles angels are only mentioned once, and that by way of contrast (Col. 2:18). Let the reader open any concordance and observe the continuous angelic ministry of the Revelation. There is the angel sent to John, there are angels who have control of the vials, the seals, the plagues, the trumpets, the woes, the waters, the winds, and the seven assemblies. We emphasize the last clause because of the unwarranted license taken with Scripture, which makes these seven angels (so prominent elsewhere in the Revelation as real angels in the true sense) into bishops, deacons, synagogue overseers, and the like. The archangel Michael is the
prince that standeth for Israel (Dan. 10:21; 12:1), and it
would seem that he delegates these seven angels to watch
over the people of the Lord during their time of fierce trial.

Of those who deny or ridicule the idea of angelic
ministry we would say that they only need their eyes
opened (see 2 Kings 6:16 and 17). Hebrews 1:14 declares
that they are ministering spirits, and such they appear
throughout the Revelation.

The description of the message as testified by John is of
importance. It is threefold:

(1) The Word of God,
(2) The testimony of Jesus, and
(3) All things that he saw;

but these three are not divided, they are one. What John
saw in the vision was the Word of God and the testimony
of Jesus. What is this testimony? How shall we decide its
meaning? The usage of these words in the book itself will
help us. There are seven references to the testimony of
Jesus, four of them being linked to the other description,
‘the Word of God’.

The Testimony of Jesus in Revelation

A 1:2. John testifies. The angel his instructor.


C 6:9. ‘Souls’. Martyrs promised judgment and told to wait

D 12:17. The remnant who keep this testimony.

A 19:10. The angel linked with John.

B 19:10. The prophecy (cf. verse 11 ‘and I saw heaven opened’).

C 20:4. ‘Souls’. Martyrs and their judgment awarded.

Whatever our conception of this testimony may be, one
thing is clear; it is that to which the faithful remnant cling,
it is the ‘word of My patience’ spoken of by the Lord to
the overcomer, and it is the theme and essence of the spirit
of prophecy which fills the book. This consideration leads
us to one of the most important points in the interpretation
of the book of the Revelation. It is not addressed to the
world at large, but it is addressed principally to those who are exhorted to 'overcome'. For their encouragement the seven letters to the assemblies are addressed, for their strength the whole course of events is foreshadowed. Against them the whole force of the dragon, the false christ, and the false prophet is directed. They are the ones who are sealed and kept. They are the ones who seal their testimony with their blood, they are the ones who have their blessed part in the first resurrection, they are the ones who have found access to the new Jerusalem. These are, therefore, addressed in the last verse of the introduction (1:3). The blessing promised is echoed in chapter 22. There in verses 18 and 19, threatening takes the place of blessing, which includes the adding of the plagues written in the book, and the taking away of their part out of the tree of life, the holy city, and the things written in the book, followed by the words, 'He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly', just as verse 3 of chapter 1 ends with the words, 'for the time is at hand'.

The rationalistic professor who adds or takes away from the words of this prophecy, though he will be dealt with in the judgment unless forgiven here, is not visited by the plagues which are described in this book. Once again the passage becomes luminous in the light of the fact that it is addressed to a yet future remnant exhorted to overcome in the yet future Day of the Lord. To such primarily the blessing is addressed in chapter 1:3. To such the promises and threatenings to the seven churches are addressed. We append the structural outline of this introduction in order that these studies may be as helpful as possible.
The Introduction

The Introduction (Rev. 1:1-4-)

A1 a The revelation of Jesus Christ.  
b Which God gave to Him.  
B1 c The ‘things’ shown.  
d Which shortly come to pass (en tachei).
C1 e Signified by the angel.  
f Testified by John.

A2 a The Word of God (logos).  
b The testimony of Jesus.  
B2 c The ‘things’ seen.
C2 e The reader (like the angel).  
f The hearers (like John).

A3 a The words (logos).  
b The prophecy.  
B3 c The ‘things’ kept.  
d The time at hand (engus).
C3 e John (like the reader and the angel).  
f The seven churches  
   (like the hearers and John).

Passing from the deeply interesting introduction of verses 1 to 4-, we commence the book proper in the latter part of the fourth verse.

We find no warrant for making the prophetic section of the book commence at chapter 4. One would imagine that the words of verse 2 of chapter 4, ‘I was in spirit’, occur here for the first time by the way this passage is treated by many commentators. These words ‘in spirit’ occur for the first time in the Revelation in chapter 1:10, ‘I was in the spirit in the Lord’s day’. Let us first of all, however, consider the scope of the chapter before us. It is evident that chapter 2 commences a new section, so that the chapter division here is a true one. We do not feel satisfied with any structure of this opening chapter that we have yet seen, and although realising the imperfection of the following suggestion, we think that by adhering to the terms of the Scriptures themselves, rather than by
inventing headings, we approach nearer to the true arrangement.

**Revelation 1:4-20**

A -4. The seven assemblies and seven spirits.

B a 5-. Christ the first begotten from the dead.


C c 7. His coming.

d 8. Title. Alpha and Omega. I AM.

D 9,10. John in Lord's day for testimony.

E 11. Seven assemblies particularised.

D 12-17-. Son of man in glory testifying.

C c -17-. His glory.

d -17. Title. First and Last. I AM.

B a 18-. Christ. I am He that liveth and was dead.


A 20. The seven assemblies and seven angels.

It will be observed that a fair balance of thought is indicated by the above arrangement, and one or two important aids to interpretation are educed. Let us consider verse 4.

*John to the seven assemblies which are in Asia.*—First we must spare a moment to look at the word 'assembly' translated 'church' in the Authorized Version. We have no objection to the word church; it is only because so many have limited the meaning of it that we prefer the wider and more open word 'assembly'. The word *ekklesia* is composed of two words, *ek*, meaning 'out of', and *kaleo*, 'to call, or summon'. The Septuagint uses the word *ekklesia* to translate the Hebrew word *qahal*, 'to call together, or assemble' seventy times. *Qahal* is variously rendered 'congregation', 'assembly', 'company', and 'multitude'. The first occurrence of *qahal* is important. Genesis 28:3,4 records the ratification of the Abrahamic covenant with Jacob. Let us observe its setting:
(1) 'EL SHADDAI bless thee (cf. Gen. 17:1), and
(2) 'Make thee fruitful, and
(3) 'Multiply thee,
(4) 'That thou mayest be a multitude (margin, assembly) of people, and
(5) 'Give the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and
(6) 'To thy seed with thee,
(7) 'That thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave to Abraham'.

Here it will be noticed that the ‘assembly’, or ‘church’, is the central member of this sevenfold promise. It will be further seen that the Abrahamic covenant is the only covenant in view; Jacob’s seed are the heirs together with Jacob and his forefathers, and the inheritance of the land of Israel is the final clause of this wonderful promise. It will be remembered that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob never inherited the land, although God had made the promise unconditionally. Scripture is not silent upon this fact. It calls attention rather to this evident truth. Stephen says concerning Abraham, ‘He removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell, and He gave him NONE inheritance in it, NO, NOT SO MUCH as to set his foot on’ (Acts 7:4,5). Hebrews 11:13 says, ‘These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off’. One word, and one word only, will constitute an answer that shall meet all requirements, and that word is resurrection. Apart from resurrection, practically no promise of Scripture can be fulfilled.

This is emphasized by the context of the first New Testament occurrence of the word ekklesia, Matthew 16:18, ‘On this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it’. This ‘church’ is not to be confounded with the teaching revealed later through the apostle Paul. This church has direct connection with the kingdom of the heavens, and with Peter’s ministry. Peter’s ministry in the Acts, particularly as laid down in Acts 2, and its references to the Day of the Lord, is linked to the book of the Revelation. The Lord Who spoke of
building His church in Matthew 16 is seen in Revelation 1 with the evidences of His power. He told Peter that the gates of hades should not prevail against it. Here in Revelation 1 we see Him victor over death, and possessing the keys of death and hades.

There is no warrant for the idea that the church as indicated in the Prison Epistles, or the church in its wider aspect known as Christendom, is in view here. The seven assemblies are constituted of believers who shall be found on the earth in the last days, to whom this book of the Revelation is particularly addressed. The days will be dark; persecution, temptation, and spiritual wickedness will be rife, and the words of exhortation to overcome, and the promises and warnings of the seven letters to the churches, will be needed as never before.

These seven assemblies are in Asia. Asia in Scripture does not refer to the vast continent known by that name today, but to a portion of that part spoken of as Asia Minor. Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, and the rest have been spiritualized into many mystic meanings, but we do not remember reading the mystic symbolism of Asia, nor yet of Patmos. When Peter addressed his epistle to the sojourners of the dispersion, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, he meant those actual districts to be understood, and not some mythical or fanciful meaning that might be extorted from them. It will be seen from this reference that Asia is only a small place. Ephesus was its principal city, and consequently to Ephesus the first epistle is addressed. The order in which the assemblies are named is the order in which a messenger would visit them. A glance at the map will show that from Ephesus the road runs north to Smyrna, the second assembly mentioned, then on still further north to the third church Pergamos, then it turns south-east to Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. The order is as fixed as though they were stations on a railway. The developments which are being made in Mesopotamia will cause the province of Asia to become of great importance,
for it is on the line of development, and just a little north of Pergamos in Bithynia that the railroad which joins the East with the West commences.

The prophecies of the Revelation, and indeed of the Old Testament prophets, cluster around Jerusalem and Babylon, and in the closing days immediately preceding the revelation of the Lord, the region round about these cities will be the arena of the most awful activities. Indications are not wanting at this moment that this region will be the scene of international contention. The Lord knows that in those days there will be little gatherings of faithful ones under sore pressure who will need the words of this book. To these, primarily, the book of Revelation is addressed. The overcomers are before the mind from first to last. The various subjects revealed in the book are all concerning them. Every epistle in chapters 2 and 3 is urgent in its word, 'to him that overcometh' (ho nikon or to nikonti). Chapters 4 and 5 bring before us the true overcomer (nikao v. 5). Chapter 6:1,2 introduces a view of the false christ, 'conquering and to conquer' (nikon kai hina nikesi), and so on through the book. The overcomers are seen arrayed in white robes; they overcome because of the blood of the Lamb, and finally we see them, according to the promise to the church of Laodicea, sitting upon the throne (20:4), inheriting the all things of (21:7), and having a right to the tree of life (22:14). Just as the nations and their doings are recorded in the Old Testament, according as they figure in Israel's history, so the Beast, the False Prophet, the plagues, the persecutions, the conflicts in heaven and earth, are all described and explained in their relation to the feeble remnant of faithful ones, and written for their encouragement and guidance.

Of course, we too can learn much for our blessing. Others also beside these seven churches will receive the blessing and need the exhortation of these epistles, and these seven churches, literal and actual as they are, in their turn do become in this symbolical book representations of the people of God on the earth at the time. This is quite in
harmony with the trend of the book, and is not to be confused with the other idea of making the seven churches typify seven phases of Christendom.

Asia is mentioned some fifteen times in the Acts, and was the scene of much spiritual activity. Peter, as we have seen, addressed the dispersion in Asia, and to two cities, Ephesus and Colosse, the apostle Paul addressed epistles from his prison at Rome. It is no wonder then that seven churches in Asia should be addressed as representative assemblies during the period immediately before the Day of the Lord. Events in the near East may demonstrate still more clearly how prominent this corner of the earth is yet to be. When we reach verses 10 and 11, we shall find that these seven churches are in evidence in the future scene of the prophecy, and that the primary interpretation must have these future assemblies in mind.

We will not occupy time with the discussion regarding the historic fact that no church was known at Thyatira during the first few centuries, nor enter into the many conflicting interpretations which have spiritualized these churches away into the history of Christendom.

The Book of the Revelation, addressed to the seven churches in Asia (and through them to all who are in a similar dispensational position), affords many points of contrast with the message addressed to the seven churches by Paul (and through them to all who are in a similar dispensational position). One such contrast is immediately before us. To the seven assemblies John sends salutation and wishes of grace and peace, as do Peter and Paul to the churches addressed by them, but the titles given to the Lord in connection with the greetings are of a different character, and should be noted. Paul’s invariable salutation in his epistles to the churches was, ‘Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ’, see Romans to 2 Thessalonians. The salutation before us is:
*Grace to you and peace, from the One who is, and who was, and the coming One; and from the seven Spirits which are before the throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth*’ (Rev. 1:4,5 author’s translation).

Before proceeding with the examination of the titles included in this salutation, let us observe the general arrangement of the passage:

**Revelation 1:4-6**

A  
  a  Grace.  
  b  Peace.  

B₁ ‘From’  
  c  One who is.  
  d  Was.  
  e  Coming.

B₂ ‘From’  
  f  Seven Spirits.  
  g  Before the throne.

B₃ ‘From’  
  h  Jesus Christ.  
  i  Faithful Witness (ref. to death).  
  j  Firstborn from the dead  
     (ref. to resurrection).
  k  Who loveth us.  
  l  And loosed us from our sins by His own  
     blood (ref. to death).  
  m  And made us a kingdom of priests  
     in (resurrection).

A  
  a  Glory.  
  b  Might.  

One of the most striking and deeply suggestive differences observable in the titles of the epistles of Paul, and in these epistles to the seven churches in Asia, is the use of that of *Father*. With Paul it is often ‘*Our Father*’; with John in the Apocalypse it is *never* ‘*Our Father*’. 
The references to the Father in the Revelation are as follows:

'Made us kings and priests (a kingdom of priests) unto God and His Father' (Rev. 1:6).
'... even as I received of MY Father' (Rev. 2:27).
'I will confess his name before MY Father' (Rev. 3:5).
'Even as I also ... am set down with MY Father' (Rev. 3:21).
'Having His name and the name of HIS Father (Nestle Greek Text)' (Rev. 14:1).

These occurrences, taken together, not only emphasize the different relationships maintained in the Revelation from that of the Church Epistles, but contain a complete line of truth which, while we cannot digress so far as to pursue it for the moment, yet anticipates our future findings by indicating the trend of the teaching as follows:

The teaching linked with the 'Father' in Revelation

A 1:6. A kingdom of priests unto God. 'His'.
B 2:27. Rule. 'Even as I'.
C 3:5. Confession.
   'My'.
B 3:21. Throne. 'Even as I'.
   'My'.
A 14:1. 'Firstfruits unto God'.
   'His'.

It will be seen how prominent the throne and the earthly kingdom are in these passages; there is nothing of 'Church' truth in them. We are on different ground. This will be more realized as we examine the titles used.

_Ho on kai ho en kai ho erchomenos_ (Rev. 1:4).— At first sight there appears to be something wrong with the grammar of this passage. The preposition _apo_ (‘from Him which is’ etc.) governs what is called the genitive case, which is something like our possessive. This rule is observed in the clause, ‘from the seven spirits’ and ‘from Jesus Christ’. In the passage before us, however, the title is in the nominative case. Some manuscripts had inserted the genitive _tou_ after _apo_ (‘from’), which makes it read, ‘From Him, the One who is’, etc. While there does not
seem sufficient authority for this insertion, that evidently is the meaning.

Possibly the reason why no attempt is made to ease over the departure from ordinary grammatical rules is because the Holy Spirit would have us see in this title the Old Testament name Jehovah, which in the Hebrew remains unchanged by any grammatical necessities. The Hebrew name Jehovah is the title of God as viewed in covenant with His people, and from the call of Abraham, His people Israel. Two passages in the Old Testament will help us to see the difference between God as such, and God in the relationship of Jehovah. First in the case of Noah and the animals:

‘And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God (Elohim) had commanded him: and the Lord (Jehovah) shut him in’ (Gen. 7:16).

Secondly, in the case of Jehoshaphat and the Syrians:

‘Jehoshaphat cried out, and the Lord (Jehovah) helped him; and God (Elohim) moved them to depart from him’ (2 Chron. 18:31).

In Genesis 21:33 Abraham ‘called upon the name of Jehovah, the everlasting God’, or better, the God of the age. If the reader will turn up the occurrences of olam (translated ‘for ever’ and ‘everlasting’ in Genesis) he will see that the conception of eternity is beside the mark (Gen. 9:16; 13:15; 17:8,13,19; 21:33; 48:4 and 49:26). The first reference is to the covenant made between God and every living creature on the earth. The last has reference to the superior blessing given by Jacob to Joseph. The others refer to the covenant made by God relative to the land of Canaan, and the covenant of circumcision. Every reference is limited to the earth, and to purposes and promises pertaining to the earth. Jehovah is the title of God in covenant, the God of the age, against whom Satan as the god of this age is in direct opposition.

The name Jehovah is used in combination with ten other words, forming titles which are expressive primarily of his peculiar relationship with Israel:
Jehovah-Jireh The LORD will provide (Gen. 22:14). The provision of redemption.

Jehovah-Ropheka The LORD that healeth thee (Exod. 15:26). The application of redemption.

Jehovah-Nissi The LORD my banner (Exod. 17:15). Warfare.

Jehovah-Mekaddishkem The LORD that doth sanctify you (Exod. 31:13). Worship.

Jehovah-Shalom The LORD (send) peace (Judges 6:24). Overthrow of Baal.

Jehovah-Zeba'oth The LORD of Hosts (1 Sam. 1:3). Continually used by Prophets of restoration, e.g., Zechariah.

Jehovah-Elyon The LORD most High (Psa. 7:17; 47:2; 97:9). Above mere nations and gods.

Jehovah-Roi The LORD my Shepherd (Psa. 23:1). Israel are the sheep of His pasture.


Jehovah-Shammah The LORD is there (Ezek. 48:35). The ultimate blessing of Jerusalem.

All the promises and purposes covered by these many variations or appendages to the name of the covenant-keeping God of the age find their complete fulfilment in the Revelation. The title 'Who is, was, and is coming' may be looked upon as the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew Jehovah. The Targum of Jonathan, on Deuteronomy 32:39, reads, 'Ego ille qui est et qui fuit et qui erit ... Et ipse fuit, et ipse est, et ipse erit'. This title, in varied order of its parts, occurs four times in the Revelation:

In Rev. 1:4,8, 'Who is, and was, and is coming'. The hope of His people.
In Rev. 4:8, 'Was, and is, and is coming'. The hope of creation.
In Rev. 11:17, 'Who art, and wast'. The kingdom on earth set up.

The words 'is to come' are omitted from the third reference by the Revised Version and all critical editions. The promise of the coming is fulfilled in Revelation 11, by the taking of the great power and reigning of the Lord.
There is more than a superficial reference back to Exodus 3:14,15:

‘And God said ... I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you ... Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is My Name for ever (unto the age), and this is My memorial unto all generations’.

This title, which resembles one part of the full title Jehovah, is revealed at the commencement of the deliverance from Egypt. This was the first covenant. Here was redemption by blood, and the overthrow of Pharaoh accompanied by many awful plagues and miraculous preservation. Antichrist and the False Prophet take the place of Pharaoh and his magicians, the two witnesses fill the office of Moses and Aaron, the blood of Christ our Passover is the blood of the New Covenant, which New Covenant both Jeremiah 31:31-40 and Matthew 26:28 link with the Passover. What the deliverance of Israel from Egypt was in type, the deliverance under the New Covenant in the Revelation will be in actuality. The fearful judgments of Exodus foreshadowed the great and dreadful Day of the Lord (cf. Rev. 1:10 and exposition page 164), which day is linked with the purpose and viewpoint of the whole of this prophecy.

Sufficient we feel has been said to show how very different is the relationship indicated by the titles of the passage under notice to those which describe the relationship of the Lord with the church of the mystery.

Passing from the ‘seven churches’ we pause to consider the ‘seven spirits’. Much has been written on the meaning of these seven spirits. Some believe that they represent God Himself, Who is perfect Spirit; some believe that they represent the Holy Spirit, and at first sight the position which they occupy certainly justifies a careful consideration of the Word before we place created beings in the sphere of the divine benediction. The sevenfold spiritual endowment of Isaiah 11:2 has been brought
forward to show that the Holy Spirit is intended. It is worthy of remark that in all the salutations and benedictions written by the apostle Paul, the Holy Spirit is only included once (2 Cor. 13:14). If we will turn to the structure, page 124, we shall be at once struck with the way in which the first and last members help one another in the matter of interpretation. We put them together:

A 1:4. The seven assemblies and seven spirits.
A 1:20. The seven assemblies and seven angels.

This is at least a suggestive variation, and puts forward the present interpretation, that these seven spirits are the presence angels. First notice where they are. 'The seven spirits which are before His throne'. These are mentioned again in Revelation 4:5, 'There were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God'. In Revelation 8:2 we read, 'And I saw the seven angels which stood before God'. The use of the article, 'THE SEVEN angels', implies that they are either well known or have been mentioned before.

Hebrews 1:14 is a clear indication that angels are called 'spirits', and the 'seven lamps' of Revelation 4:5 seem to have some connection with the description given of the living creatures of Ezekiel 1:13, 'their appearance was like ... the appearance of lamps'. In Revelation 1 the structure brings together the seven spirits, the seven stars, and the seven angels. In the first verse of chapter 3, spirits and stars are brought together:

'These things saith He that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars' (Rev. 3:1).

Further, in Revelation 5:6 we read:

'And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts (living creatures), and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth'.

The reader will remember that we urged a careful reading of the Minor Prophets as a preparation for the imagery of the Revelation. This verse is a case in point.
To those who have a good knowledge of the prophecy of Zechariah this passage will speak very plainly:

'For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone (i.e., fixed upon, see Deut. 11:12, "a Land"; 1 Kings 9:3, "this House") shall be seven eyes' (Zech. 3:9).

In Zechariah 4:2 we read of 'the seven lamps', and in 4:10:

'They shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, these seven (lamps which thou sawest, 4:2), these are the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth' (Zech. 4:10 author's translation).

While the seven eyes which are the seven spirits of the Lord run to and fro in the earth, other messengers which figure in the Revelation occur in Zechariah, and are said to 'walk to and fro in the earth'. There are the horsemen and chariots of 1:8-11 and 6:1-7. These charioteers are said to be 'the four spirits of the heavens'. Thus we have seven spirits and four spirits. In Revelation 6 we read of these chariots, and in 7:1 we read of the four angels standing on the four corners of the earth. The seven are said to run, and the four are said to walk to and fro in the earth. The first chapter of Ezekiel describes the wonderful living creatures which he saw, afterwards defined as the cherubim, which chapter should be read by the student. Angelic ministry is very prominent in the record of God's dealings with Israel:

'The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads' (Gen. 48:16).

'Behold, I send an Angel before thee' (Exod. 23:20, cf. 32:34 and 33:2).

'Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, Who hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that trusted in Him' (Dan. 3:28).

'My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths' (Dan. 6:22).

'The angel of His presence saved them' (Isa. 63:9).

'The angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors' (Acts 5:19).

'There stood by me this night the angel of God' (Acts 27:23).
Scripture testifies to the great number of angels that there are waiting to do the Lord’s bidding:

‘The chariots of the Lord are twice ten thousand thousand, even thousands upon thousands’ (Psa. 68:17 author’s translation).

‘The heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels’ (Heb. 12:22).

‘Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of His holy ones’ (Jude 14 R.V.).

‘I heard the voice of many angels ... the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands’ (Rev. 5:11).

‘Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him’ (Dan. 7:10).

At the giving of the law angels had an active part:

‘The word spoken by angels’ (Heb. 2:2).

‘Who have received the law by the disposition of angels’ (Acts 7:53).

‘The law ... was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator’ (Gal. 3:19).

Angels are prominent in the Second Coming of Christ (see Matt. 24:30,31; 13:39-41; 1 Thess. 4:16; 2 Thess. 1:7). That angels are connected with the nations seems to be made known to us in the book of Daniel. In Daniel 10:5-13,20,21, under the title of princes, we have, if we are not mistaken, angelic beings over the affairs of the nations. The princes of Persia and of Greece are unnamed, but by withstanding Michael seem to imply that they are the angels of Satan, who, watching over his interests in the development of the Gentile power under the successive monarchies of Babylon, Persia and Greece, finally assumes the kingdoms and the glory of this world as shown in Luke 4. Daniel 12:1 speaks of Michael as ‘the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people’.

The four winds (Rev. 7:1,2), fire (14:10), waters (16:5), and the sun (19:17) are at different times under their power. An angel is used to reveal the word of the Lord to Zechariah (chaps. 1 to 6) in much the same manner that the angel ‘signifies’ to John the Apocalypse. The word
*aggelos* 'angel' occurs in the *Revelation* over 70 times, in *Hebrews* 13 times, and in the four *Gospels* and the *Acts* over 70 times, in *Peter’s Epistles* 4 times, in *Paul’s Epistles*, apart from *Hebrews*, 14 times (translated 'messenger' in 2 Cor. 12:7), of which number, one occurrence only is found in the *Prison Epistles*, and that one a negative statement (Col. 2:18). These facts alone will help us to see the close connection which the *Revelation* and its angelic ministry has with God’s earthly kingdom purposes.

In 1 Timothy 5:21 Paul says, 'I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels'. This is closely parallel with Revelation 1:4,5. While we would not say that the seven spirits are the angels of the seven churches, Revelation 1:20 and 3:1 help us to see some connection between them. The teaching of Scripture as to the ministry of angels will prevent us from taking the seven references to the angels of the churches to mean some office in the church or synagogue. Angel means angel in its ordinary sense throughout this book. Angelic ministry follows Israel from the nation’s beginning up to the nation’s end (for a time) at the close of the *Acts*. Angelic ministry, like supernatural gifts, ceases with the national existence of Israel, but revives when the time for Israel’s national restoration approaches. Our limited knowledge prevents us from saying that the seven spirits before the throne, the seven angels of the churches, of the trumpets, of the vials, and the elect angels are all the same, but the contemplation of the picture of the mighty spiritual myriads, ever doing the Lord’s service, as revealed in the Scriptures, should cause us to glorify Him Who is raised far above all principality and power, angels and principalities and powers being made subject unto Him.

In our next chapter we shall endeavour to draw the reader’s attention to some of the glories of the Lord Jesus Christ as set forth in the verses following.
CHAPTER 3
The Glory and Dominion
Revelation 1:5,6

We pass from the seven spirits which are before the throne to the contemplation of the person and titles of the Lord Jesus Christ. The best manuscripts omit the title Christ in several of the passages where the Authorized Version reads Jesus Christ, and the evidence seems sufficient to prove that in verse 5 of the first chapter we meet with the title for the last time, unless we include the last verse of chapter 22. Omitting this last verse, for it does not really come under this heading, the title Jesus Christ occurs but thrice, namely, Chapter 1:1,2 and 5. The almost exclusively Pauline title Christ Jesus never occurs in the Revelation.

The first title that follows is, ‘The faithful witness’. The order of the words in the original gives the emphasis to the word faithful, ‘The witness, the faithful one’. In Revelation 2:13 the Authorized Version translates the same words, ‘My faithful martyr’. This is corrected in the Revised Version, but it is well to remember that true witnessing carries with it incipient martyrdom. Every witness may not necessarily die a martyr’s death, but if faithful to his trust he will be willing thus to die rather than surrender truth. Such a witness was the Lord Jesus Christ while on earth. Such was He when from heaven He spoke to John. The faithfulness of this testimony is emphasized in the Revelation. In 3:14 the Lord is spoken of as ‘The faithful and true witness’. In 19:11 He is called ‘Faithful and True’, while in 21:5 and 22:6, faithfulness and truth are predicted of the words and sayings of this book. When the Lord stood before Pilate, He linked His kingship with His testimony to truth:

‘Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth’ (John 18:37).
The next title, ‘The first begotten of the dead’, calls our praiseful attention to another of His glories. The word translated first begotten occurs 9 times in the New Testament. One reference (Heb. 11:28) speaks of the Egyptians, leaving eight, the number of resurrection, for those that speak of Christ and His people. The word is used of Christ in connection with three different periods:

(1) With reference to CREATION (Col. 1:15).
(2) With reference to HIS BIRTH at Bethlehem (Matt. 1:25 in the Received Text; Luke 2:7).
(3) With reference to HIS RESURRECTION (Col. 1:18; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 1:5).

It is also used in Romans 8:29, where His pre-eminence is the thought more than birth or resurrection. A reference to Colossians 1:15-18 will show that this title carries with it power and authority. Hebrews 1:6 shows that authority to be divine, ‘When He again bringeth in the first-begotten into the world He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him’. We often overlook the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself could not finally become King to Israel apart from resurrection. Psalm 2, and its New Testament quotations, apart from many other Scriptures which testify of the glories that were to follow the sufferings of the Lord, will prove this. As the risen One He claimed all power in heaven and in earth. In the Revelation we see Him putting forth that mighty power which is not retracted until the new heavens and the new earth need that rule no longer.

The next title, ‘The Prince of the kings of the earth’, leads us to Psalm 89. There we find the three titles of Revelation 1:5 together:

‘Also I will make Him My FIRSTBORN, higher than the KINGS OF THE EARTH ... His throne ... shall be established ... as a FAITHFUL WITNESS in heaven’ (Psa. 89:27,36,37).

Psalm 89 and the Book of the Revelation have truth in common. The former speaks of the covenant made with David with respect to his throne and his Seed. It is to David in the first sense that the above quotations apply.
'I have found David my servant' (Psa. 89:20). Concerning this one we read, 'Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground', and again, 'and cast his throne down to the ground' (Psa. 89:39 and 44). David's hopes were in his greater Son. Acts 2:25-36 declares that David understood that the promises concerning 'the fruit of his loins' necessitated resurrection, 'He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ'. 'The last words of David' (2 Sam. 23:1-7) speak of the righteous rule of his greater Son. 'He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God'. David knew that he, personally, had not fulfilled the requirements of the ideal ruler, but he knew that God's covenant made it certain that One, the Son of David, was going to fulfil them. Revelation 1:5 presents us with One who should rule and reign in righteousness. One of the prophecies He will fulfil is, 'His throne ... shall be ... as a faithful witness in heaven' (Psa. 89:36,37). Three times is David mentioned in the Revelation, each time with reference to Christ. In Revelation 3:7 Christ is seen as the true Eliakim (God shall cause him to rise), the One who bears the key of David upon His shoulder, Who shall be for a 'glorious throne to his father's house' ( Isa. 22:15-25). In Revelation 5:5, He is seen as 'the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David' prevailing to open the seven-sealed book. In Revelation 22:16, He is once again presented as the 'Root and the Offspring of David'. The kings of the earth, over whom the Lord is Prince, figure repeatedly in prophecy (cf. Psa. 2:2; 102:15; 138:4; 148:11; Rev. 6:15; 17:2,18; 18:3,9; 19:19; 21:24).

From these passages it will be seen that some of the kings of the earth are among the enemies of the Lord, while others rejoice with His people in His glory. In Revelation 1:5 the Lord is spoken of as Prince of the kings of the earth. In 19:16 He is seen as King of kings. Isaiah speaks of Him as the 'Prince of peace'. Daniel calls Him the 'Prince of princes'. In the Acts He is spoken of as the 'Prince of life', and as 'a Prince and a Saviour', which is in strong contrast to the 'prince of this world'. One of the reasons why this title comes in Revelation 1 will be found
in Hosea 3:4, 'The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince'. The days of their long rejection draw to a close, and the title given to the Lord indicates that the nation of Israel is again to come into relationship with God. The word prince (archon) is linked with the title, 'The Beginning' (arche, Col. 1:18), and indicates that the Person thus titled is First, pre-eminent. The word is also translated Ruler. How grateful we should be to know that the kings of the earth are to have a Ruler. How the whole world is crying out for one. So great will the need of a Ruler be felt, that the kings of the earth will hail the advent of the Antichrist with approbation. These words, true in 1914, are terribly, frightfully true today, in 1950. Dark apostasy lies between our day and the righteous reign of the Prince of peace, but we rejoice in the testimony of the Revelation that a day is coming when He shall take unto Him, His great power and reign. The Lord be praised for the promise of the Day Star. May we, too, be found 'looking for a Saviour'.

The threefold titles of the Lord Jesus — the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth — are followed by a threefold ascription. He is said to be one who loves, who loosed from sins, and who made them a kingdom of priests.

**UNTO HIM THAT LOVETH US (Rev. 1:5 R.V.).**— Of all the manifestations of the attributes of God as revealed by the Lord Jesus Christ, love is singled out for first mention. The first words recorded as coming from the heart of redeemed man in this book direct us to the fountain head. Our Authorized Version tells us He loved, but the Revised Version, following all the critical Greek texts, tells us He loveth.

The love of God in Christ lies at the foundation of His mighty purpose. How prominent is the love of God to Israel. In the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before he died we read, 'Yea, He loved the people'. In Deuteronomy 7:7,8 we read, speaking of Israel:
"The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people ... but because the Lord loved you".

The prophet Hosea speaks of the same period:

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him ... I drew them ... with bands of love" (Hos. 11:1-4).

In Jeremiah 31:3 we read:

"The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting (Heb. olam; the LXX of Jer. 38:3 reads aionion) love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee".

The words "of old" (me-rachaq) have reference rather to distance than time, and might be rendered "from afar" (see A.V. and R.V. margins). To Jeremiah the Lord appeared "from afar". To the prophet's eyes appeared the long looked-for day when 'He that scattered Israel, will gather him', when the Lord makes a new covenant with the house of Israel (see the whole chapter). Jeremiah looked down the ages, and his eye prophetically looked upon Revelation 1:5, and read the words, 'Him Who LOVETH us'. This age-enduring love remains true and unshaken, even though it is sadly true that Israel has forgotten the love of thine (her) espousals (Jer. 2:2), and 'the time of love' (Ezek. 16:8). The recognition of this point shows the tender grief which is behind the first charge of Revelation 2, 'Thou hast left thy first love'.

The love of God is pre-eminently linked with redemption. We often use the love of God when we speak of His watchful care, His faithfulness, His guiding hand, His providence, but we speak not fully in harmony with the Word of truth — love is peculiarly sacred to redemption.

"God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16).

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).
'The Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me' (Gal. 2:20).

These and similar passages will immediately come to mind. So in Revelation 1, 'He loveth' is followed by 'and loosed us from our sins by His blood'. The Authorized Version reads 'washed' (lousanti), but the Revised Greek texts read 'loosed' (lusanti), which reading is supported by the test of numerics. Adding this occurrence, the word 'to loose' occurs seven times in the Revelation. Once used of sins, twice of seals (5:2,5 in the Received Text), twice of angels (9:14,15), and twice of Satan (20:3,7).

To realize the meaning of this term we might look at one or two references outside the book of The Revelation, namely:

'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil' (1 John 3:8).

'The elements shall melt ... all these things shall be dissolved ... the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved' (2 Pet. 3:10-12).

'Having broken down the middle wall' (Eph. 2:14 author's translation).

We must be ready to find the word used in its secondary as well as its primary meaning, and not imagine that it is necessarily a truth that we must always translate one Greek word by one English word. John 1:27 and 2:19 show how one writer uses the word, first in its primary meaning 'loose', secondly in its more figurative meaning 'destroy', and a rigid concordant or etymological system would be insufficient. To loose, to melt, to dissolve, to destroy, these are the words that are used to convey something of its meaning. What fulness there is in those triumphant words of praise, 'Unto Him Who loveth us and LOOSED us from our sins'. Vitally linked with this expression is the word translated ransom, 'to give His soul a ransom (lutron, the loosing price) for many' (Matt. 20:28), or redemption in Hebrews 9:12. What a prospect is in store for the redeemed: sin's claims dissolved, melted, gone!

'Dead to sin' is a somewhat similar though fuller expression. We say fuller for two reasons. 'Dead to'
involves something more than 'loosed out of', and 'sin' is deeper than sins. The word _hamartia_ ('sin') as used by Matthew (the gospel of the kingdom) always has the plural, or the present manifestation in view, never SIN as it is dealt with in Romans 5. Sins are forgiven, but SIN is reckoned with in other ways. Here in Revelation 1, the redeemed give thanks for being loosed from sins, and that 'by His blood'. From the first recorded offering in Genesis to the last mention of redemption in Revelation, throughout all dispensations (Patriarchal, Mosaic, Mystery), the blood of Christ is prominently placed with respect to forgiveness and redemption. When theology and creed have said their all, a mystery profound is still unfathomed with respect to the necessity for the shedding of blood. It is for us to accept the truth and ever to set it forth.

The word _blood_ occurs 19 times in the Revelation, but of these only four passages have reference to redemption (1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 12:11). These references are divided into two by the lines of truth they contain. Revelation 1:5, 'loosed from sins'; 5:9, 'Made a redemption'; 7:14, 'they made them white'; 12:11, 'they overcame'. These two aspects of the efficacy of the blood of Christ are important guides to the special aspect of the book of the Revelation. First it is deliverance from sins, and a redeemed people. Then it is the overcomer in the power of that redemption, and, as we have before hinted, the overcomer is the character of the Book of The Revelation.

The reference to the blood here in Revelation 1:5 takes us back to Matthew 26:28, where the Lord, as Passover, referred to His blood as the blood of the New Covenant shed for many for the remission of sins. Revelation, as we have seen, completes and corresponds with Genesis. It also has many parallels with Exodus. A greater than Pharaoh oppresses Israel here; an overthrow greater than that of the Red Sea is here; mightier magicians than those who withstood Moses work their black arts; greater plagues fall than those of the first Exodus. Again the
people are sustained in the wilderness and miraculously fed. The Passover Lamb is no longer offered — the true Passover, the blood of the New Covenant, has been shed (see Jer. 31:31,32 for connection between New Covenant and deliverance from Egypt). The first exodus ended in failure; two only, Caleb and Joshua, overcame. The second exodus will be a glorious success. As always, that which is first is not spiritual, but natural. Israel shall yet possess the inheritance given by the covenant to Abraham. This may be the reason that the word 'loosed' is used in this verse The cleansing from sins is a part of redemption, but so also is deliverance. The exodus from Egypt was pre-eminently a deliverance, and not so much a cleansing. After the Red Sea was passed the cleansing aspect came into prominence. The Tabernacle, the Offerings, the divers Washings, the Priests, these all came afterwards. So in Revelation 1:5, the loosing from sins is followed by the making of verse 6. This subject, however, is too important to deal with now, we must give verse 6 the space that such a passage demands.

The reader who realizes the special interpretation of Revelation will not forget that many precious lessons may be learned by application and analogy. Let us serve, walk, witness and live in the power of the words, 'Unto Him that LOVETH us, and LOOSED us from our sins'. 'Sin shall not have DOMINION over you'.

Some are redeemed that they may walk the streets of the new Jerusalem, some to people a renewed earth, some to constitute the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. In Revelation 1:5,6 redemption has in view the forming of a kingdom:

'And He made us a kingdom, priests to God and His Father' (Author's translation).

The Authorized Version reads 'kings and priests', but the critical Greek Editions read 'kingdom, priests'. The word 'priests' must not be understood as something separate, but as filling out the word kingdom. It is not an
ordinary kingdom that is in view; it is a priestly kingdom, or as Peter puts it, 'a royal priesthood' (1 Pet. 2:9). This is the Septuagint rendering of Exodus 19:6, 'a kingdom of priests'.

In Revelation 5:9,10 we have another ascription of praise which is in many ways parallel:

'Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: because Thou wast slain, and didst make a purchase to God with Thy blood out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them a kingdom and priests to our God; and they shall reign upon the earth' (Author's translation).

The fulfilment of this is found in Revelation 20:6:

'Blessed and holy who hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no authority; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years' (Author's translation).

As we view these three passages of Scripture together, it seems that the priestly kingdom is the millennial kingdom, and that only those who have overcome, and who have had their part in the first resurrection constitute its members. We cannot help but feel that Old Testament prophecies concerning future blessings have been too hastily generalised as millennial. We believe investigation will prove that much that has been considered millennial does not take place till the thousand years are finished, and that a place in the millennial kingdom is largely a matter of being 'accounted worthy'. This will be considered in its place. If it is established, it will be nothing short of revolutionary in its effect upon the teaching of Scripture relative to the ages to come. To one people only has the promise or the possibility been given of becoming a kingdom and priests, and that is Israel. The various companies of believers that are called churches at different times have their place in the kingdom of God, or the kingdom of the heavens, but that is not being constituted a kingdom as the passage before us states.

It will be well if we turn back to the passage in Exodus 19 which speaks of this royal priesthood, and note the
context. In the third month from the exodus from Egypt the Lord gives a message to Israel:

‘Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation ... And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do’ (Exod. 19:4-6,8).

Here we have a reference to the coming out of Egypt, of a covenant, of a promise and of an undertaking by Israel. Jeremiah 31:31,32 supplies us with the result of this compact. It takes us back to the coming out of Egypt, and shows us that the covenant entered into by Israel was broken by them. By the Old Covenant and creature effort, Israel could not become a kingdom of priests. Only under the New Covenant could this be possible.

‘Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, and I rejected them, saith the LORD’ (Jer. 31:31,32).

The gracious words continue, dealing with their sins and ensuring the permanence of Israel as a nation (31:36). Though rejected in the past, they shall be ‘cast off’ no more (31:37). It will be noticed, however, that the highest blessing (‘a kingdom of priests’) is not repeated. That which was placed before all Israel under the Old Covenant, is reserved for an elect company under the new. Isaiah 61:6 gives further statements concerning the priestly functions of Israel:

‘But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God’.

* A.V.— ‘Although I was an husband unto them’. The Hebrew word ba’al has two meanings, (1) Lord, (2) To reject. Hebrews 8:9, ‘And I regarded them not’, settles the matter.
These words are addressed to ‘those that mourn’ (Isa. 61:2,3), who ‘shall be comforted’ (Matt. 5:4).

‘The nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish’ (Isa. 60:12), saith the Lord of Israel in that day; ‘the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob’ (Isa. 59:20). This is quoted in Romans 11:26 to prove that ‘all Israel shall be saved’. All Israel are an elect nation (Rom. 11:28), yet within that elect nation there was an election unto higher glory (Rom. 11:7). The rest who were ‘blinded’, mentioned in verse 7, are again mentioned in verse 25. The national position of Israel has no reference to their individual obedience. Their sins shall be taken away (Rom. 11:27), they, though enemies, are beloved for the fathers’ sakes, and the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. But though all Israel shall enter into their blessed portion by the mercy of God, an election from the elect nation already anticipate fuller blessings. Israel is now blind and dead in sin. This election have had their eyes opened, have believed, have suffered, have endured, and they will constitute the kingdom of priests, the royal priesthood, the ones who have their part in the first resurrection, who, as priests, reign as kings during the thousand years.

Peter addresses his epistles not to the whole nation, but to this elect company among them:

‘Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ’ (1 Pet. 1:1,2).

Such have been begotten unto a living hope, they have an incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance reserved in heaven. Israel, as a nation, had no such hope. They shall inherit the earth. This elect company pass through fiery trial which shall issue in honour and glory at the ‘Revelation of Jesus Christ ... hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought to you at the Revelation of
Jesus Christ' (1 Pet. 1:3-13). The hopes of this company centre in the Revelation, the apocalypse of Jesus Christ, and take us to Revelation 1. Of them it is written:

‘But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ... which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy’ (1 Pet. 2:9,10).

They thus anticipate Israel’s restoration (see Hos. 1:9,10; 2:23, etc.). They, like Abraham and all overcomers, are ‘strangers and pilgrims’ (1 Pet. 2:11; Heb. 11:13). They are exhorted as follows:

‘Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, in order that in the revelation of His glory, ye may rejoice exultingly’ (1 Pet. 4:12,13 author’s translation).

Once again fiery trial, followed by glory at the revelation, is the theme. Yet further:

‘The God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal (aionion) glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you’ (1 Pet. 5:10).

The second epistle of Peter continues in the same strain. Chapter 1:11 speaks of an abundant entrance into the aionion kingdom. Chapter 2 vividly depicts the times of the book of the Revelation, and its testing of the elect remnant. Noah, Sodom, fallen angels, and Balaam figure in the story. Chapter 3 deals with the long deferred coming, and the introduction of the new heavens and new earth. It is of further interest to note that the apostle addresses believers in Asia Minor — he also addresses them from Babylon, which plays so prominent a part in the Revelation.

To understand the special teaching of the Revelation, we must keep prominently before us that the millennial kingdom is largely one of reward, it is the aionion glory and kingdom, entrance into which is by suffering. It particularly deals with an elect company who are consistently spoken of throughout as ‘the overcomers’.
Failure to perceive this exclusive character has made the millennial kingdom a kind of dumping ground for all unfulfilled prophecy, leaving the ‘Ages of Ages’ which follow it a blank prophetically, and has also introduced into the book those who have no part nor lot there at all. Neither Christendom nor the Church are in view. Israel, and particularly the faithful remnant of overcomers, are the chief human interest. Read 1 and 2 Peter again and again — they give clear light on the teaching of The Apocalypse.

With the ascription of ‘glory and dominion’ (Rev. 1:6) we reach the first of a series of eight Amens which run through this book.

The glory of redemption is His; He is the ‘stronger than the strong man armed’; He it is that has the keys of hades and of death. The glory also of the kingdom is His.

The first time we read of glory in the New Testament is in Matthew 4:8, where the tempter showed the Saviour the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. We know how futile the temptation was, and here in the first chapter of Revelation we rejoice to see Him acknowledged as the One rightly to receive the glory as a sequel to His redeeming love.

The word translated ‘dominion’ is kratos, and means ‘strength’; Chapter 5:13 renders it ‘power’, and these are the only occurrences in the Revelation. The word is used in Ephesians 1:19:

‘And what the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe according to the inworking of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him out from dead ones’ (Author’s translation).

This great strength seems to have reference to ‘him that had the power (strength) of death, that is, the devil’ (Heb. 2:14).

Peter links glory and strength together in 1 Peter 4:11, ‘To Whom be praise and dominion’ (glory and strength), and chapter 5:11 also. Colossians 1:11 links glory and
strength for our practical walk now in the phrase, “according to His glorious power”, literally “the strength of the glory”. One thing at least is clear, we have here no empty glory, but a glory resting upon a solid foundation. He who had the strength of death has been vanquished, the glory long usurped is to be his no longer. It will be remembered that in Psalm 8:2 we read, “Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength”. The Septuagint and Matthew 21:16 give “perfected praise”. This shows that the word “strength” must be the Figure of Metonymy, where the ascription of praise is called forth by the great strength of the overcomer.

Many of our readers will know that the title, “To the chief musician upon Muth-labben”*, which stands over Psalm 9 is really the conclusion of Psalm 8. This expression is taken to mean “the death of the champion”, indicating in the first place the destruction of Goliath, and prophetically the overthrow of Antichrist and Satan, “the enemy and the avenger”. A further and fuller light shines on Psalm 8 when we realize that “through death” Christ destroyed him who has the strength of death, and it is quite possible that the “champion” may refer more to Christ Himself than to the antitype, Goliath. This is strengthened by the quotation of Psalm 8 in Hebrews 2:9, where it continues “but we see Jesus ... for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour”.

The dual description of “glory and strength” is found in Psalm 29:1, and verse 2 continues, “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto His name”. Verse 3 says, “The voice of the LORD is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth”, and verse 11 concludes with the comforting assurance that He to Whom glory and strength is ascribed will give strength unto His people. As we read Psalm 29 and then read in Revelation 1 of the voice that is like the sound of many waters (verse 15) and see the strengthening power of

* Under the title “The Secrets of the Son”, fresh light has been thrown on this term in The Berean Expositor vol. 36, p. 54.
His right hand (verse 17), we realize that the King of Psalm 29 is before us.

Psalm 96 introduces ‘a new song’, and in verse 7 the ‘kindreds of the people’ are called upon to ascribe to the Lord ‘glory and strength’, and to ‘say among the heathen that the L ORD reigneth’ (verse 10), ‘for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth’ (verse 13). We cannot help thinking of Revelation 1:7, ‘Behold He cometh with clouds’.

The more we search and examine the Old Testament prophecies, the more we realize the culminating fullness of the words of Revelation 1:6. The glory and strength thus ascribed is His ‘unto the ages of the ages’.

There are three variations of this usage of ‘age’. We have in Hebrews 1:8, ‘Thy throne, O God, is unto the age of the age’, in Ephesians 3:21, ‘the age of the ages’, and in Revelation 1:6, ‘the ages of ages’. Just as we have the expression, ‘King of kings’, ‘Holy of holies’, ‘Servant of servants’, ‘Hebrew of Hebrews’, ‘Pharisee of Pharisees’, so we have ‘ages of ages’, not merely an indication of length of time, but of superlative excellence. During the ages that are to ensue, commencing as far as we can perceive with the millennial reign, the glory and strength of them will be ascribed unto the Lord. Here we see Him crowned with glory and honour, highly exalted, and given the Name that is above every name. This enables us to look beyond the conflict of earth to the peace that shall come, with confident expectancy. To this glorious ascription of praise heaven adds its first apocalyptic Amen. The use of this word ‘Amen’ in Revelation is suggestive. We find it used in three connections. It follows:

(1) The ascription of praise to the Lord.
(2) The statement of and prayer for His coming, and
(3) It is the title of the Lord Himself.
Amen

A 1:6. Glory to Him, etc.
C 3:14. The Amen, the faithful and true Witness.

A  a 5:14. Four living ones, and twenty-four elders.
  b 7:11,12. Angels.
  a 19:4. Four living ones and twenty-four elders.

It will be seen that 5:14; 7:12, and 19:4 suggest an expansion of the first passage (1:6), and a careful study of these verses will throw further light upon the One who is the Prince of the kings of the earth, the throne upon which He sits, and the circumstances under which He reigns.

We with the inspired book add our hearty Amen. To His glory we, too, say, Amen, to His coming again, Amen, and looking to the wonderful and manifold promises of God we say with the apostle, 'In Him is the Yea and in Him the Amen, unto the glory of God' (2 Cor. 1:20).
CHAPTER 4

‘The Cloud Comer’

We have reached the first *Amen* of this book, and find that the section bounded by the word, deals with the revelation of the Lord Jesus and the manner of its delivery to John (by an angel), the ones to whom John is to send the written record of the visions, and the great theme, the fulfilment of God’s promises to Abraham and David in the future regeneration and blessing of Israel as a kingdom of priests. Verse 7, which follows, is in turn bounded by another *Amen*. This is the briefest section of the book, yet how important it is, may be gathered not only from its contents, but by its unique position. The words of verse 7 are introduced by ‘Behold’, a word that occurs some 30 times through the book. ‘Behold, He cometh with the clouds’. The last occurrence (22:12) deals with the same great topic — the Coming of the Lord.

So often are clouds spoken of in connection with the Coming of the Lord that we can readily believe that when the apostle says, ‘Behold, look, He cometh with THE clouds’, he would have us understand that he means that here is the fulfilment of the many passages which declare them to be the accompaniment of the returning Lord. The great passage referred to here is Daniel 7:13,14. It occurs after the ‘little horn’ had spoken ‘great things’, and the body of the beast was ‘given to the burning flame’ (*cf.* Dan. 7:8-11, 21-25, with Rev. chapters 13 and 19).

‘I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven ... His dominion ... shall not pass away, and His kingdom ... shall not be destroyed’ (Dan. 7:13,14).

The parallel between this chapter and the book of Revelation is very marked and must be kept much in mind. Matthew 24:30 speaks of the clouds in the same connection, ‘and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory’. Matthew 26:64 deals with the same theme. ‘Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of
power, and coming in the clouds of heaven'. This thought is evidently of great importance, for it finds a place also in Mark and Luke. Acts 1:9 speaks of the Ascension of the Lord from the mount of Olives, 'and a cloud received Him out of their sight'. Verse 11 declares, 'He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven'. 1 Thessalonians 4:17 tells us that the hope of those who are described dispensationally as the church at Thessalonica is to be 'caught up together in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air'. A comparison of the teaching of 1 and 2 Thessalonians with Revelation will show that they refer to the same period. The word cloud (nephele) is one of the words that occur 7 times in the Apocalypse, and is associated with the Lord's coming, the time of reaping the harvest of the earth, the finishing of the mystery of God, and the triumph of those who loved not their lives unto the death. (It is interesting to know that among the Jews of early times the Messiah was called 'Cloud Comer' and 'Son of a cloud'). 'And every eye shall see Him, even those who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the land shall wail because of Him' (Rev. 1:7 author's translation).

The statement 'every eye' seems to be qualified in this sentence by the words that follow. Matthew 24:30 undoubtedly refers to the same event, and says, 'Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man ... coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory'. The 'tribes of the land', and the mourning of those who pierced Him, take us back to Zechariah 12:9,10:

'And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son'.

This passage contributes several particulars that are essential to the true interpretation of Revelation 1:7.
(1) The occasion and time of its fulfilment is after the nations have come against Jerusalem. This event is spoken of again in Zechariah 14:12-16. The fearful judgment that falls upon those who have fought against Jerusalem is echoed in Revelation 19:18.

(2) Those who ‘look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn’, are the ‘house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem’, more fully particularized into houses and families, ‘Nathan, Levi, Shimei, etc’. By no legitimate interpretation can these definite particulars be made to mean the church of the New Testament.

(3) This ‘look’ and this ‘mourning’ result from the ‘spirit of grace and supplication’. Repentance at last will be given and the Lord ‘shall send Jesus Christ ... whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution (restoration) of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began (an age)’ (Acts 3:19-21).

Together with Zechariah 12:9-14 see 13:1, ‘In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness’. Revelation 1:5,6 has already referred to this. Further, Zechariah 14:2-4 must be read:

‘For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle ... Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations ... And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem’.

This reference links the passages up still more. The reader is prevented from spiritualising ‘the mount of Olives’ by the topographical statement, ‘which is before Jerusalem’. This and much more in Zechariah (as indeed in all the so-called minor prophets) throws light upon the time and locality of Revelation 1:7.

Referring again to Matthew 24:29,30, we learn one more item:
'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven', etc.

Revelation 1:7 then takes place not only in direct connection with Jerusalem, but 'immediately after the tribulation'. Now there is no possibility of doubt as to when this tribulation takes place. Matthew 24:15-21 says:

'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place ... then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be'.

There can be only one such tribulation in history, and therefore to this Revelation 7:14 refers:

'These are they which came out of the tribulation, the great one' (Author's translation).

Revelation 1:7 must therefore take place after Revelation 7:14. Further, this tribulation is directly the result of the setting up of the 'abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet'. This is set out in detail in Revelation 13 and the tribulation is connected with refusing to receive the mark of the beast. The unparalleled tribulation of Matthew 24, which is immediately followed by the coming of the Son of man as in Revelation 1:7, is referred to in Daniel 12:1-3:

'And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, these to aionion life, and those to shame and aionion contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars unto the age and beyond' (Author's translation).

This passage emphasizes the 'overcomer' as plainly as does the book of the Revelation. The reference to Michael takes the reader on to Revelation 12:7-10:
'And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ... Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ'.

The whole teaching of the Prophets and the Gospels bears one united witness to the fact that Revelation 1:7 is the hope of Israel, is to be literally connected with the Mount of Olives (as Acts 1:11,12), and Jerusalem, that it will immediately follow the great tribulation, which takes place when Michael drives Satan to earth and the Antichrist arises in blasphemy. To be a kingdom of priests is Israel's destiny. To none other is such a promise made. To fulfil that promise the Lord Jesus as the King Priest returns, and Revelation 1:7 records that coming.

Revelation 1 is as much future as Revelation 19. The traditional interpretation that makes the first three chapters past and present, and the future section to start from chapter four is wrong.

The apostle concludes this solemn verse with a double confirmation, 'Yea, Amen'. He uses the same expressions in 22:20:

'Yea, I am coming speedily. Amen! Come Thou, O Lord Jesus' (Author's translation).

This is the revelation of the Lord Jesus. Till this takes place earth will be a wilderness to faith, and a fruitful soil for sin. Till this takes place the god of this age will rule as the prince of the authority of the air. While the hope of the One Body is not expressed in any of the passages referred to, yet they, in sympathy with a groaning creation, a down-trodden and blinded Israel, and a doomed Gentile world, also add heartily and prayerfully, 'Yea, Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus'.

'I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God. Which is, and Which was and Which is to come, the Almighty' (Rev. 1:8 R.V.).

If the reader will refer to the structure given on page 124, he will see that the title Alpha and Omega is balanced by the title taken by Christ, 'I am the first and the last'. Further, the words, 'Who is, and Who was, and Who is
coming’ are echoed in the title ‘I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore’. The title, ‘the Almighty’ finds its answer in the claim, ‘I have the keys of hades and of death’. This perfect unity and reflection of purpose and attribute has already been before us in verses 4 and 5.

The title Alpha and Omega in Revelation 1:8 is not specifically given to Christ, although the fact that it immediately follows verse 7 would lead one to think it refers to Him as the coming One. Revelation 22:12-16, however, leaves us in no doubt, and as this chapter structurally corresponds with chapter 1, it would seem to settle the matter for us.

‘And behold, I come quickly ... I am Alpha and Omega ... I Jesus have sent Mine angel’.

The expression Alpha and Omega is explained by the words, ‘beginning and ending, first and last’, and we shall have opportunity of considering this title when we come to verse 17. The title that is new to us is the last one, ‘The Almighty’ (pantokrator, but translated omnipotent in Rev. 19:6). The title occurs ten times in the New Testament, nine of the occurrences being in the Revelation. It is a title therefore that has some peculiar connection with the subject of the book. The passages are as follows: Revelation 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7,14; 19:6,15; 21:22, and they deal with the reign and rule of the coming King, judgment, wrath, and blessing as pertain to the purpose of God in Israel and the nations. The one reference outside the book of Revelation is 2 Corinthians 6:18, where the insistent note is separation from uncleanness, ‘perfecting holiness in the fear of God’ (2 Cor. 7:1). The first passage where the Septuagint uses the title is 2 Kings 5:10, where it is rendered in the Authorized Version by ‘The LORD God of hosts’ (2 Sam. 5:10 A.V.). The other occurrences in 2 Kings (LXX) are 7:8,25,27 (2 Sam. 7:8,26,27 A.V.). Each reference has relation to David, the greatness of his kingdom and the future of his house. This title which occupies so great a place in the Prophets, ‘The LORD God
of hosts' and 'the Lord of hosts', seems to be used most in those Prophets that approximate most to the theme of the Revelation. The title comes before us again in James 5:4, 'The Lord of Sabaoth', the context urging patience unto the coming of the Lord. John, in Revelation 1 continues in much the same strain:

'I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience in Jesus, came to be in the island which is called Patmos, because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus' (Rev. 1:9 author’s translation).

John calls himself a 'brother and a partaker'. The use of the word 'brother' in the Revelation is by no means indiscriminate, in fact it appears to be confined to one distinct class, namely, those who are the overcomers by faith, and who spoke forth the Word of God. Revelation 1:9 is the only occurrence of the word in the singular, the remaining four occurrences being in the plural. These four references should be noted here, in order that their light may be used in learning the true significance of John's title.

Martyrdom attaches to the first reference, overcoming to the second, the possession of the testimony to the third, and keeping the sayings of the book to the fourth.

'Brethren' in Revelation

A 6:11. Fellow servants and brethren killed — for the Word of God and the testimony (verse 9).

B 12:10. Accuser of brethren cast down. Overcome by the word of their testimony (verse 11).

A 19:10. Fellow servant and brethren that have the testimony of Jesus ... the spirit of prophecy.


No one reading these passages can doubt but that they are closely connected. What is the common theme? The testimony of Jesus — the spirit of prophecy; in other words, 'the sayings of this book' of the Revelation.
Our study of the Scriptures can never be too careful. Nothing is written therein without due regard to all truth. The indiscriminate use of the title 'brethren' is a case in point. The fact that the title is used in a restricted sense in Revelation is manifest. It also agrees with one or two other prominent passages. For example, when we read in Matthew 25 concerning the nations and the treatment of the 'least of these My brethren' (verse 40), we must not think that the whole of the nation of Israel is necessarily intended. Rather is it to be interpreted, in the light of the Revelation, to refer to that faithful company, who for the 'testimony of Jesus' will know what it is to be hungry, and naked, and in prison, and also to 'be killed'. These, and not the nation of Israel as a whole, are the 'brethren' intended. John also calls himself a 'partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and patience'. The Greek of this passage, as indeed the English, presents a little difficulty unless we recognize a figure of speech named Hendiatris, 'one by means of three'. Such a figure occurs in Hebrews 10:20, 'A new and living way'; similarly, 'I am the way, the truth and the life' can read, 'I am the true and living way'. The words in Revelation 1:9 mean not three things, but one, and that one defined by two other terms. The one thing is 'tribulation', and it is peculiarly that tribulation which is related to the earthly kingdom, and which necessitates much patience. 'We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God' was Paul's testimony as recorded in Acts 14:22. (The sudden departure from narrative to quotation here, for Paul's own words are quoted, only emphasizes the more to us the stress which the apostle evidently gave to this utterance).

Patience is referred to seven times in the Revelation, and its 'perfecting work' is seen as the story of the book unfolds. Two passages call attention to the 'patience' of the saints during the tribulation which comes at the time of the Beast.

'If any one is for captivity unto captivity he goeth: if any one is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he is killed. Here is the patience and faith of the saints' (Rev. 13:10 author's translation).
'Here (in connection with the mark of the beast, 9-11) is the patience of the saints who keep the commandment of God, and the faith of Jesus ... blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth' (Rev. 14:12,13 author's translation).

John with all true brethren were sharers in this kingdom tribulation and its 'patience'. His next remark links the tribulation with its cause. It is the particular application of the universal truth, 'I have given them Thy Word, and the world hath hated them' (John 17:14).

John tells us that he 'became', or 'found himself' as we should say perhaps, 'in the island called Patmos', a small island halfway between Rome and Jerusalem, situated in the sea of prophecy, 'the great sea'. Tradition tells us that John was 'banished' to the Isle of Patmos. John tells us in Revelation 1:2 that he 'bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw', while verse 9 tells us that he received this word and testimony, and saw the things written in this book 'in the isle called Patmos'. Revelation 20:4 includes 'the word of God' among the causes of martyrdom of those who have their part in the first resurrection. Not only so, but 'the witness (or testimony, same word) of Jesus' also. This double expression balances the passage in 1:9, these being the first and last occurrences. In chapter 12:17 the dragon makes war with those who 'keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus'. Chapter 19:10 has already shown it to be both the mark of the brethren, and the spirit of prophecy. These five passages should be well considered, especially 1:9 with 20:4. As members of the One Body, and those who have believed the truth as given through the ministry of the prisoner of the Lord, we have a tribulation connected therewith, not a tribulation connected with the earthly kingdom, but nevertheless a real one. We too need much patience, we too may overcome, we too must holdfast the faithful Word. Though our destinies may be different from those who will reign in the millennial kingdom, there are many close parallels so far as our conduct and experiences are concerned. May we be encouraged to overcome,
remembering for our encouragement how verse 9 reads on from verse 8, where we see the ‘Almighty’ ready to help in time of need.

‘The Day of the Lord’ (Rev. 1:10); the prophetic period of the Book

‘I came to be in spirit in the Day of the Lord, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet’.

Verse 9 tells us that John came to be in Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus; verse 10 tells us that he came to be in spirit in the Day of the Lord, and verse 11 completes the parallel by saying, ‘What thou seest, write in a book’. The word and testimony were received by signs (‘He sent and signified’, verses 1 and 2) in the isle called Patmos, and are vitally connected with the statement ‘in spirit in the Day of the Lord’.

There are four occasions where John tells us that he was ‘in spirit’: namely, Revelation 1:10, he became in spirit in the Day of the Lord; 4:2, he became in spirit, and saw the throne in heaven; 17:3, he is carried away into a desert in spirit to see the woman sitting on the scarlet beast; 21:10, he is carried away in spirit to see the holy city. When John is to be taken to a desert or a mountain he is ‘carried away in spirit’, and when he is transported into time, ‘the Day of the Lord’, or to the future heavenly sphere, he writes, ‘I became in spirit’.

The four references made by John find an echo and an explanation in the statements to a like effect by Ezekiel:

‘The spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD’S house’ (Ezek. 11:1).

‘Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the Captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me’ (Ezek. 11:24).

‘The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones’ (Ezek. 37:1).

In Ezekiel 40:2 we have a close parallel to Revelation 21:10:
'THE CLOUD COMER'

In the visions of God brought He me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by (upon) which was as the frame of a city on the south. And He brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate. And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel' (Ezek. 40:2-4).

The man with the measuring reed (verse 3), and the command to declare what he saw (verse 4), also find their parallels in the Revelation 21:10. This and the seven succeeding chapters are punctuated by the words, 'then, and, or afterwards, he brought me'. Ezekiel 43:5 records similar words. Ezekiel was not merely taken in vision from one locality to another, but was taken into the yet future even as was John.

In Ezekiel 8:1-3 the parallel with the first chapter of Revelation is most pronounced:

'And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me. Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem' (Ezek. 8:1-3).

The description of the wondrous being who appeared to Ezekiel is very similar to the description of the Lord Who appeared to John. The vision is a prelude to a revelation of dark apostasy and the retiring glory of God. It is so also in the book of the Revelation.

There is no mystery about the meaning of John when he tells us that he: 'came to be in the Day of the Lord in spirit' (Rev. 1:10). It cannot possibly mean that he felt in a specially spiritual frame of mind on a Sunday — such a suggestion is too trivial to require refuting. We should,
moreover, be thankful that the expression ‘I became’ has been used in verse 9 in a sense that is literal. John became (egenomen — came to be) in Patmos literally and really. He became in the Day of the Lord in spirit, and not literally and really. There are a great number of believers who, if they were asked for their Scriptural warrant for calling the first day of the week ‘the Lord’s day’, would immediately point to Revelation 1:10 as their authority. Further, many of those who use this title of the Lord’s day abstain from using the word Sun-day because of its pagan connection (though to be consistent they should follow the Society of Friends and omit the names of days altogether, for Moon-day or Thors-day are equally as bad). It would doubtless come as a shock to such that their term ‘Lord’s day’ is equally pagan! The title for the Sun is ‘Lord’. In Hebrew it is Baal. The Syrians call it Adonis, from adonai, Lord. Pagan Rome called the first day of the week Dies Dominica, omitting the word ‘Sol’ because the Sun was pre-eminent. Other days had the planets mentioned by name. There is nothing to choose therefore between Sun-day and Lord’s-day as applied to the first day of the week — both alike are pagan — one masking the paganism by a traditional sanctity.

The book of the Revelation is taken up with something infinitely more vast than days of the week. It is solely concerned with the Day of the Lord. To read that John became in spirit on the Lord’s day (meaning Sunday), tells us practically nothing. To read in the solemn introduction that John became in spirit in the Day of the Lord, that day of prophetic import, is to tell us practically everything. Traditional bias is seen even in the rendering of en by ‘on’ instead of ‘in’. The Hebrew language does not allow such a construction as ‘The Lord’s Day’, it can only be expressed by ‘The Day of the Lord’. The Greek language, however, like the English, permits of both modes of expression, and the one used here is ‘The Lord’s Day’, making the word Lord’s an adjective. There can be no difference between the thing signified, whichever mode of expression be chosen, it is the same day, the difference is
one of emphasis: Revelation 1:10 means ‘the Lord’s Day’; had it been set out as in the Hebrew it would have meant ‘the Lord’s day’, but no other day than this could be meant by either expression.

A parallel expression is found in 1 Corinthians 4:3, where the Authorized Version translates, ‘man’s judgment’; it should read, ‘man’s day’, the construction being the same as Revelation 1:10. Man’s day manifestly means man’s day of judging, as evidenced by the context. Revelation 1:10 takes us to a future day, when the Lord and not the man shall be the judge. ‘The Day of the Lord’ in the Old Testament is either Yom Jehovah, or Yom l’Jehovah, ‘a day for the Lord’. Isaiah 13:6 gives some idea of the day of the Lord:

‘Howl ye (referring to Babylon); for the Day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty’.

Verses 9-13 go further and closer to the imagery of the Revelation:

‘Behold, the Day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger ... For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine ... in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger’ (Isa. 13:9-13).

The prophecy of Joel is entirely taken up with that day. ‘Alas for the day! for the Day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come’ (Joel 1:15). Chapter 2:1,2, and 11 show how terrible will be that day; 3:14 links that day with the harvest, and the judgment of the nations. Obadiah 15,16 speaks of it as a day of retribution for the heathen:

‘For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon My holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been’ (Obad. 15.16).

in words that are very similar to Revelation 18:6-8:
'Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God Who judgeth her'.

Zechariah 14:1-11 tells us that in the Day of the Lord the nations will be gathered against Jerusalem, that He will go forth and His feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives, that He shall be King over all the earth, and Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

'Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzzi'ah the king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: but it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.

And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and His name one.

All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited'.

168 **This Prophecy**
We have endeavoured to bring to the reader's attention in these pages, of the great importance of studying the Prophets (all of them, including the 'Minor Prophets'). If this is not done, the Revelation must remain a book of unexplained imagery and intention, but to a mind already charged with the purpose, language, and symbols of the Prophets who spoke so much and so often of the Day of the Lord, the Revelation will be the great gathering up of all their threads, the capstone of their united building.

If in Revelation 1, John is taken, in spirit, to the future Day of the Lord to see the visions and to write them in a book, all the book that he writes, including chapters 1, 2 and 3, must be future in its interpretation. There is no part of the prophecy or vision that is not 'in the Day of the Lord'. That day is the point of time from which all time must be measured. When John says of anything 'it is present', or 'it shall arise', he speaks from the standpoint of his vision — the Day of the Lord, and not A.D. 96. No vision has been given to John as far as we have gone in our study. All is preparatory and introductory. Immediately, however, the prophetic point of time is settled, the visions begin, for as soon as he 'became in spirit in the Day of the Lord' he 'heard a great voice, as of a trumpet'. This is a reference to Zephaniah 1:14-16 where 'the voice of the Day of the Lord' is linked to 'a day of the trumpet'. The voice said to John:

'What thou art seeing write in a book, and send it to the seven churches, unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea' (Rev. 1:11 Author's translation).

These places are all found in that part of the earth adjoining the land of Canaan called by us Asia Minor. The reason why this spot of earth and not another is chosen is the simple yet awful fact that it is directly connected with the place of Satan's throne, for that will be at Pergamos, as Revelation 2:13 shows. The development of things in the Near East (originally written March, 1916; and more so today 2007), makes this spot of earth to be increasingly
important, and here the scene of the Revelation is laid; round about this part much will happen, and members of the assemblies in these places will come prominently into view during the time of tribulation and persecution.

We have found that the apostle John was taken ‘in spirit’ to the Day of the Lord, a period concerning which Old Testament prophecy is specially clear. From that standpoint the apostle sees the visions of the Apocalypse, and is here instructed to write them in a book, and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia. We can well believe that as Paul was commissioned to write to seven churches, which should be representative of the Gentile section of believers particularly, so these seven churches in Asia may have been selected in order to show the character of the church in the last days.

The trumpet voice that John heard when translated to the Day of the Lord caused him to turn to see the One Who thus spoke. The vision of the Son of man in the midst of the seven golden lampstands is presented to him. This is the opening vision of the book. To miss its character is to be turned into by-paths of error.

The structure of the passage shows how the mind is concentrated upon the person and dignity of the Son of man:

Revelation 1:12-17

The Opening Vision

B 13-16. The Son of man. His person and glory.

The member B 13-16, being the most important, demands expansion, thus:
The Son of Man (1:13-16)

B a In the midst of the seven golden lampstands.
b Clothed to the foot.
c Girt with girdle.

C d Head and hair like snow.
c Eyes as a flame of fire.
e Feet like brass in a furnace.
d Voice like sound of many waters.

B a In right hand seven stars.
b Out of His mouth a sword.
c Countenance as sun.

The Son of man is seen standing in the midst of the seven lampstands and holding in His right hand the seven stars. Revelation itself tells us what these represent:

'The mystery (secret) of the seven stars which thou sawest in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks (lampstands). The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks (lampstands) which thou sawest are the seven churches' (Rev. 1:20).

We cannot help feeling that any attempt to 'explain' this inspired explanation is apt to mislead. If the angels are not angels as the rest of the angels in this book, then the explanation given to John needs an inspired solution.

Two passages of Scripture seem to be referred to under the symbol of the seven golden lampstands. Exodus 25:31-40, which speaks of the six-branched lampstand in the tabernacle, and Zechariah 4:2. We ought to note, in passing, that Solomon, who like Moses received a pattern to work by, has ten golden lamps instead of seven (1 Kings 7:49).

The seven lamps link the vision of Revelation 1 to wilderness times rather than the kingdom of peace. Zechariah 4 refers to the lampstand of gold, with its seven lamps, as bearing a light in a day of small things.

Connected with these seven lamps, and supplying them with oil, are two olive branches. Revelation 11:4 uses the symbol as of the two witnesses. From this we gather that the seven assemblies constitute the Lord's witnesses in a
corrupt day. In their midst stands the Son of man, and watching over them are angels, who are held responsible for their charges.

The description given of the Son of man is parallel with the description given in Daniel 10, so that if the apostle had wanted to make us connect the subject matter of Revelation 1 with things distinctly to do with Israel, he could not have done it better. In order that the parallel may be clearly seen, we put the two descriptions together:

**Daniel 10:5,6,8-14**

Behold, one — a man.
Clothed in linen.
Loins girded with fine gold of Uphaz.
His body was like the beryl.
His face as the appearance of lightning.
His eyes as lamps of fire.
His feet like polished brass.
His voice like voice of a multitude.

There remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption ... then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face touched the ground.

And behold a hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and the palms of my hands.

Fear not, Daniel.

I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days.

**Revelation 1:13-17,19,20**

A Son of man.
Clothed with a garment to the foot.
Girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

His head and hair like wool and snow.
His eyes as a flame of fire.
His feet like fine brass.
His voice as the sound of many waters.

And when I saw Him I fell at His feet as one dead.

He laid His right hand upon me.

Fear not.

Write the things which thou hast seen ... the seven stars are ...
Daniel 10:5,6,8-14
Shut up the words and seal the book to the time of the end (12:4).

Revelation 1:13-17,19,20
Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear ... and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand (1:3).

The close parallel that is evident here leads to one conclusion. The time, place and people of the two books are the same. ‘Thy people’, is Israel, ‘the latter days’ bring us to the period of the Revelation, ‘the Day of the Lord’. The difference between the two accounts is that Daniel was told to shut up the words and seal the book to the time of the end, whereas John is told, ‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein, for the time is at hand’.

Having such a definite connection with Israel and the time of the end impressed upon the opening vision of the Revelation, we wonder how it is that so many see the ‘church’ in this passage. However, it is not for us to question the views of others, but rather to get to know more and more of the truth of God for ourselves. Turning to the vision that John beheld, we find that in the midst of the seven golden lampstands was the Son of man.

The Son of Man.— Titles, when used of Deity, are dispensational. God is spirit. The invisible God has made Himself known under a variety of titles. In the Incarnate Word He is revealed as the Saviour, the Shepherd, the Head, the Son of God, and many other titles. Each has its distinctive connection. The Son of man is related to the earth; not the earth in a wrong or unspiritual sense, but to God’s purposes of blessing in the earth. The first occurrence in Scripture is found in Psalm 8, where He has ‘dominion over the works of Thy (God’s) hands’. The title occurs 84 times in the New Testament, and is never used by Paul in his Church Epistles. The one other reference in Revelation is 14:14, where, crowned with a golden crown, He comes to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.
The seven references in Matthew 24 and 25 to the Son of man link the title closely with the parousia, the great tribulation, the days of Noah, the throne of glory, and judgment of the nations. Something of the glory of this Son of man is gathered from John's description. The garment which reached to the foot was the robe worn by both kings and priests. When Isaiah 'saw His glory', he tells us, 'His train (or the hem of His garment) filled the temple'. The golden girdle is met with again in Revelation 15:6, as worn by the seven angels who came out of the Temple of God. When Daniel saw the Ancient of days (7:9), he says, 'the hair of His head was like pure wool', which John says of the Son of man. 'White' is mentioned more times in the Revelation than in the rest of the New Testament. To the overcomer it is given to walk with the Lord in white, to receive a white stone, to be clothed in white raiment. The Son of man sits upon a white cloud, rides a white horse, and finally occupies a great white throne. Righteousness at length shall be brought in, even as Daniel 9 declares it shall be. The all-searching eyes of the Son of man are seen in the 'flame of fire'. Those eyes saw the evil in the church of Thyatira (Rev. 2:18), and when He at length rides upon the white horse to rule the nations, still it is written, 'His eyes were as a flame of fire' (19:12), 'His feet like unto fine brass (shining copper), as if they burned in a furnace' (1:15). When Ezekiel saw the Cherubim, he tells us that their feet sparkled like the colour of burnished brass (copper) (1:7). When we wish to indicate the failing and earthly character of even the best, we use a figure and say, 'After all, they have feet of clay'. Nebuchadnezzar's image that he saw in vision, while having a golden head, had feet of clay. The heavenly Cherubim, and the Son of man, have feet that shine like purified burnished brass (copper). John says that His voice sounded like many waters. Ezekiel tells us that when he saw the returning glory of the God of Israel:
‘His voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory ... and He said ... the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet ... shall the house of Israel no more defile’ (Ezek. 43:2-7).

The first chapter of the Revelation is preparatory to this returning glory. John saw that the Son of man had control of the seven angels, for ‘He had in His right hand seven stars’. This clause is repeated in 2:1 and 3:1. He also had proceeding out of His mouth a sharp two-edged sword. This is referred to in 2:12 and 16. This sword is to be used in the smiting of the nations (19:15-21). If it should seem strange to speak of a sword proceeding from the mouth of the Son of man, Hebrews 4:12 will show the appropriateness of the figure. The word translated ‘sword’ in Revelation 1 occurs six times in the book, and only once elsewhere, namely, Luke 2:35.

The final description given by John is that His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. John had once before seen this glory foreshadowed, when the Lord was transfigured, for we read that ‘His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light’ (Matt. 17:2). Upon this mount, Peter tells us, the Lord Jesus received ‘honour and glory’. The only occurrence of ‘Son of man’ in Paul’s writings is in Hebrews 2:6, and connects the ‘honour and glory’ with the dominion of Psalm 8 and is given as a pledge of the kingdom over which as Son of man He will reign (Heb. 2:5-9). Here in Revelation 1, John beholds the glorified Son of man, the King Priest after the Order of Melchisedec. The result of this glorious vision upon John was that he fell at His feet as one dead.

Let us rejoice as we think of the high glory that awaits the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and let us not hesitate to render to Him His due.

It may be of service to repeat a portion of the structure of this chapter, which is given in full on page 124. The portion we give, shows the parallel of verses 5-8 and 17,18.
Revelation 1:5-8 and 17,18

B a 5-6. Christ the first begotten from the dead.
C c 7. His coming.
   d 8. Title. Alpha and Omega: I AM.
   * * * * * * * *
C c -17-. His glory.
   d -17. Title. First and Last. I AM.
B a 18-18. Christ. I am He that liveth and was dead.

It will be recognized that throughout this chapter the glory and the power that pertain to the Son of man is in virtue of His resurrection. He is the first begotten from the dead — behold, He is alive unto the ages of the ages. He it is Who looses from sins. He also it is that has the keys of hades and of death.

The effect upon the tribes of the land when they see Him whom they pierced is mourning; the effect upon John, who is called the disciple whom Jesus loved, the disciple who seemed to have the closest intimacy with his Lord in the days of His humiliation, the effect upon him is even greater, he fell at His feet as dead.

When Job, who had heard of the Lord by the hearing of the ear, saw Him, he said, ‘I am vile’, and abhorred himself. When Isaiah could say, ‘mine eyes have seen the King’, he was forced to say, ‘I am a man of unclean lips’. Daniel, as we have seen, tells us that his comeliness turned into corruption and he retained no strength; and John, who had leaned on his Master’s bosom, who had taken the Saviour’s mother under his protection, he fell at His feet as dead.

All the loud boastings of the men of this world, all the creature-glorifying that constitutes so great a bulk in the travesties of truth that are spreading over the earth, all these pretensions vanish as a summer cloud when the creature stands before the risen glory of Him Who was,
and is, and is to come. Though we see Him not with our eyes, this is His high position now. To us He is not only ‘Jesus’; He is our Lord.

The right hand which held the seven stars was laid upon John, and the first words of the Son of man are heard saying, ‘Fear not; I am the first and the last’. Another occasion that the Lord said the words, ‘Fear not’, is in Luke 8:50. The messenger from the house of Jairus came and said, ‘Thy daughter is dead, trouble not the Master’. But He Who, though found in fashion as a man, was to overcome death itself said, ‘Fear not’, and taking the girl by the hand said, ‘Maid arise’. While we do not wish to imply any connection between these utterances of the words, ‘Fear not’ with the glorious title that immediately follows, it is significant that in both cases we find the Lord exercising His authority over death.* The connection between the title, ‘The first and the last’ and resurrection is noticeable in 2:8, ‘These things saith the first and the last, which was dead and is alive’. The original of Revelation 1:17 is more emphatic than in the Authorized Version. The risen Lord does not merely say, ‘I am the first and the last’, but, I (emphatic) am the first and the last. Isaiah 41:4 uses this title in connection with God’s purpose in Israel, saying, ‘Calling the generations from the beginning, I the LORD, the first, and with the last’. He who called the generations from the beginning, the generations before the call of Abraham, as well as the special generation of the line of the promise through Abraham, He will be also ‘with the last’ when He gathers Israel and blesses the Gentiles. Notice in the context a reference to the making of idols. In Isaiah 44:6 we find the title again, ‘Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and His redeemer the LORD of hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and beside Me there is no God’. Note again how verse 9 renews the reference to the making of idols. We meet the title once more in Isaiah 48:11,12:

* See Appendix 1, page 422, where a reference is given to a later writing by the author, who found after further study and added light, that the ruler’s daughter was raised from sleep, not death.
'I will not give my glory unto another. Hearken unto Me O Jacob and Israel, My called; I am He, I am the first, I also am the last'. Again we see in verse 5 a reference to an idol, graven image, and molten image. These are the three Old Testament references to the title. The title occurs in Revelation also three times. Revelation 1:17; 2:8, and 22:13. There is no doubt when we read Isaiah that this title is claimed exclusively by God. He will not give His glory to another. In the Revelation it is just as exclusively used by Christ as the risen One. We have no argument to set forth. We accept this series of facts as a revelation to our faith and recognize in the Son of man One Who is also the Most High God. Not only does the Lord take to Himself these high glories, but He unfolds the fuller reasons for our confidence in Him, 'I am He that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive unto the ages of the ages, Amen; and have the keys of death and hades'. Romans 14:9 says, 'For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and lived again, that He might be the Lord both of the dead and living'. Romans 6:9 says, 'Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more lordship over Him'. He Who died, lives, and more than that, He has dominion. He has the keys of death and hades. Keys denote authority. The resurrection of Christ has taken the victory away from death and hades.

The fact that in this opening vision of the Revelation this authority over death and hades is emphasized, links the first chapter with the twentieth, which ushers in the new heavens and new earth:

'He will destroy (swallow up) in this mountain the face of the covering cast over (covered over) all people, and the vail that is spread over the nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces' (Isa. 25:7,8).

Hosea 13:14 says in a context which speaks of Israel's restoration, 'I will ransom them from the power of the grave (sheol, equivalent to hades); I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave I will be thy destruction'. He who had the power of death has
been vanquished. A stronger than he has overcome him. This world, still lying in the wicked one, still ruled by the prince of this world and the god of this age, is to give place to the rule of righteousness of heaven's deathless King. Fear not, he says to John. You are about to see evil at the worst development. Satan and Antichrist and demons will conspire together, with death and hades (Rev. 6:8) as confederates, to fix the curse of sin upon this earth. Fear not John, I live, I control, and finally thou shalt see death and hades, together with Satan and his accomplices, cast into destruction. With this encouragement, John is told to write that which he sees.

Verse 19 has been used as the basis for division of the Revelation in such a way that it has held in its grasp the minds of thousands. This verse is supposed to teach the threefold division of the book:

The things which thou hast seen.
The things which are.
And the things which shall be hereafter.

According to this system of interpretation the messages to the seven churches are the things which are, and consequently the seven churches are taken as the history of the professing church down the age, generally indicating the church of Philadelphia as having special reference to the particular persuasion of the writer for the time being.

The future prophetic part of the book, according to this system, commences at chapter 4, where John is told that he will be shown things which must be hereafter. There is another rendering that adheres closely to the literal wording of the passage and also to the sense of the context, which runs as follows:

'Write therefore what things thou sawest, and what they are, even what things are about to happen hereafter'.

Alford, Rotherham, Moses Stuart and Dr. Bullinger, among others, have given this as the meaning. That the expression, 'and what they are', is a good rendering, meaning 'what they represent or signify', may be seen in
the very next verse. The seven stars ARE the angels, and
the seven lampstands signify the seven churches. Verse 9,
therefore, instead of indicating a threefold division of the
Revelation, testifies to its unity. John is told to write the
things which he sees, say what they signify, and to know
that these visions which he interprets are the things that are
to take place hereafter. Verse 20 immediately begins to do
this for us.

(1) John had seen the seven stars and the seven lampstands.
(2) He is told what they signify, namely, angels and churches.
(3) And he knew that they were to be hereafter.

Instead, therefore, of ransacking the history of
Christendom to find something that accords with the
statement made in the addresses to the seven churches, we
see that the Lord has shown us the things that shall be
hereafter. On the earth, in this fast-approaching Day of the
Lord, will be a believing and tried people (they will not
constitute the church of the one Body), and for the
encouragement and warning of these churches who are the
‘overcomers’ of the rest of the book, this prophecy is
written.

The following chapter shows the close connection of
these seven churches with the rest of the book.

We accept the interpretation of the seven stars as
all-sufficient. They are seven angels. To re-interpret this
as meaning a bishop or a synagogue overseer is nothing
but presumption. Angels figure enough in this book to fix
the meaning beyond controversy. It is no new thing for
Israel to be placed under the care of angels; Michael the
Archangel is their prince, and throughout their history
(see Heb. 1 and 2; Gal. 3:19; Acts 5:19; Dan. 3:28; 6:22),
angelic ministry was the rule, not the exception. It is
perfectly normal therefore to find, in a book which draws
aside the veil and shows us some of the heavenly activity,
that the little companies of believers in their day of trial are
given into the care of angelic custodians.
CHAPTER 5
The Epistles to the Churches
Revelation 2 and 3
(A demonstration of the essential unity of the Book)

In our last chapter we drew attention to the marked connection that is made with the book of Daniel, thereby establishing more clearly than ever the truth that the book of the Revelation has special relation to the people of Israel. We further drew attention to what we consider to be the true interpretation of Revelation 1:19, which disposes of the idea that the seven churches must refer to the history of professing Christendom. We saw that the passage taught that what John saw, and what the visions meant, were the things that should be hereafter. If this be so, chapters 2 and 3 contain an unfolding of the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden lampstands, and relate to the future.

Before we consider the epistles to these churches in detail, we would draw attention to the way in which they fit into the remaining part of the book. Some will be more obviously connected than others, but we believe we shall be able to indicate sufficient points of contact to establish the important fact that the period to which these seven epistles refer is identical with the period covered by the remainder of the Revelation. In other words, the seven epistles throw light upon the spiritual history of the churches from within, while the remaining visions throw light upon the spiritual history of the same period from without. Now although it is not a necessity that the inner history of any particular period should always at all points reflect the outer history, yet we should expect, at places, to find some reflection, and it is to that reflection we now call attention.

On page 114 the reader will find the structure of the book as a whole. The central member covers chapters 4 to
20 and exhibits a sevenfold division of the visions. In order to show the connection between this sevenfold series of visions and the seven churches, we will call the first section of this sevenfold division Ephesus, the last Laodicea, and the intervening members according to the order of the seven churches. We can then note anything that seems to connect the attitude of the church with the period indicated by its name.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Verse(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ephesus Church</td>
<td>(2:1-7)</td>
<td>In the midst seven stars in right hand. Threat to remove lampstand out of its place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephesus Period</td>
<td>(4:1 to 7:3)</td>
<td>In the midst seven-sealed book in right hand. Seven lamps, eyes, spirits. Mountains and islands ‘moved’ (same word as above) out of their places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smyrna Church</td>
<td>(2:8-11)</td>
<td>Tribulation; faithful unto death; second death; hurt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smyrna Period</td>
<td>(7:9 to 11:14)</td>
<td>The great tribulation; two witnesses slain; death; slay; hurt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pergamos Church</td>
<td>(2:12-17)</td>
<td>Hold fast My name; Satan’s throne; the hidden manna; the doctrine of Balaam. Fear Thy name; the kingdoms of this world become Christ’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pergamos Period</td>
<td>(11:15-19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thyatira Church</td>
<td>(2:18-29)</td>
<td>The woman Jezebel; the morning star; the rod of iron; depths of Satan; keep works; faith and patience; false prophetess; her children killed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thyatira Period</td>
<td>(12 and 13)</td>
<td>Woman clothed with sun; the twelve stars; the rod of iron; Satan; keep commandment; patience and faith; false prophet; God’s children killed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardis Church</td>
<td>(3:1-6)</td>
<td>A few with undefiled garments; they shall walk with Me in white, name confessed before the Father.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardis Period</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>144,000 not defiled; they follow the Lamb; without fault before the throne of God.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Philadelphia Church (3:7-13)

Worship before thee; a pillar in the temple; the name of the City of God — New Jerusalem; the trying of them that dwell on the earth; the hour; I will keep thee out of the hour.

The Philadelphia Period (15 to 18)

Worship before Thee; the temple; the great city Babylon; they that dwell on the earth; one hour; come out My people.

The Laodicea Church (3:14-22)

White raiment; supper; faithful and true; Amen; spue out of mouth; sit in My throne; stand at door.

The Laodicea Period (19 and 20)

Fine linen; marriage supper; faithful and true; the Word of God; out of His mouth a sword; set on throne; the Judge.

Such is the summary of the points of resemblance. Let us consider their bearing upon the prophetic unity of the book.

The first church that is addressed is the Church at Ephesus. The Lord speaks of Himself as the One Who holds the seven stars in His right hand, and Who walks in the midst of the seven gold lampstands. The tree of life is spoken of as being ‘in the midst’ of the paradise of God. In the vision which covers the ‘Ephesus’ period, John sees the Lord as a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. He alone was found worthy to take the seven-sealed book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne. There is a threat made to the church at Ephesus of the removal of their lampstand out of its place. If this threat is taken in conjunction with the actual effect produced by the opening of the sixth seal, when ‘every mountain and island were moved out of their places’, its force will be the more felt. In chapter 7 we read of devastation which is about to fall upon the earth, the sea, and the trees, and this makes the promise to the overcomer of being granted to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God of greater moment.
Turning to the Church at Smyrna we enter into an atmosphere of tribulation; this is the note that is struck in the opening of the Smyrna section. There we find those who came out of great tribulation arrayed in white robes. Death is on every hand; the sea becomes blood, and a third part of its creatures die; many men die of the waters also, that were turned to wormwood. Not only death, but strange beings who have power to ‘hurt’ (chap. 9) are spoken of. A limitation is set to their power to hurt, namely, ‘only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads’. This lends emphasis and point to the promise to the overcomer at Smyrna — he shall not be ‘hurt’ of the second death. Men may ‘kill the body’, even as they do the faithful believers of chapter 11, hence the exhortation and example, ‘Be thou faithful unto death’ like those two faithful witnesses.

The Church at Pergamos is said to holdfast the Saviour’s name, and in the Pergamos section rewards are spoken of for those that ‘fear Thy name’. Satan’s throne is at Pergamos, but the church there must remember that soon the true King will reign, according as we read in the corresponding section that the seventh angel sounds, announcing the advent of heaven’s King. The promise of the hidden manna takes the mind back to the pot of manna that was laid up in the holiest of all in the Tabernacle. It is appropriate therefore to read in chapter 11 of the temple being opened and the Ark seen; the reference to the doctrine of Balaam is parallel to the reference to those who destroy (or corrupt, see margin) the earth.

The Thyatira Church emphasizes the corrupt state introduced by ‘that woman Jezebel’, and the promise is made to those who have not known the depths of Satan. Those ‘depths’ are seen in the Thyatira section, when the dragon stands upon the sand of the sea, and calls up the beast and the false prophet. ‘The woman clothed with the sun’ is in strong contrast with ‘that woman Jezebel’. Jezebel was a false prophetess, reflecting in the church the presence of the false prophet outside. There is the parallel
between those who 'keep the works', and those who 'keep
the commandments'. Among other qualities that are
commended by the Lord are 'faith and patience', and in the
corresponding section of the book the patience and faith of
the saints is a subject to which the reader's attention is
particularly drawn. Here again a close parallel is observed
between the promise made to the overcomer, and the man
child in chapter 12. Both are to 'rule the nations with a rod
of iron', and so to the end of the series. The diligent
student will compare the passages, and see how perfectly
the whole fits together.

In the Sardis Church and section, the great parallel is
that between those who have not defiled their garments,
and the 144,000 undefiled ones of chapter 14.

Philadelphia has many parallels which are obvious in
the list already given; the reference to worshipping before
them and before the Lord, the two contrasted cities, and the
emphasis in both sections on 'the hour' are important.

Laodicea is the only Church that speaks of 'supping',
and its corresponding section is the one that contains all
the other references to 'supper' in the Revelation (chap.
19). The counsel to buy 'white raiment' is evidently in
view of the 'fine linen' wherewith the bride is clothed. He
Who speaks to the church is called the faithful and true
witness; He Who rides out of heaven in the corresponding
section is the same — 'faithful and true'. The promise to
the overcomer, that of sitting with the Lord in His throne,
is realized in chapter 20:4, where those who live and reign,
and sit upon thrones are those who have proved themselves
faithful witnesses during the time of antichristian
oppression. The reference in Revelation 3:20, 'I stand at
the door', is linked with the 'Judge' by James 5:9, and so

This close comparison seems to establish beyond
dispute the interrelation of the seven churches with the rest
of the prophecy. Here is a field of search open to the
humblest possessor of a Bible. The interpretation that
necessitates an intimate knowledge of the history of Christendom for the past nineteen centuries is by force of circumstances limited to the very few. The interpretation we have been led to adopt is absolutely independent of any source of information outside the covers of the inspired Word.

When the apostle Paul was inspired to write his epistles to the churches, we find that he wrote to seven. When the Spirit of God would give us a picture of the spiritual state of the Day of the Lord, He causes John to write to seven churches in Asia.

It is not our intention to take each epistle in detail; we shall content ourselves with drawing attention to one item before passing to the great central prophecy of the Revelation in chapter 4.

THE NICOLAITANES.— The church at Ephesus is commended for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. The church at Pergamos is said to have those who hold the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. The church of Smyrna is not associated with the Nicolaitanes by name, but it has to suffer at the hands of those who are called by the Lord, ‘the synagogue of Satan’, just as to the church of Thyatira it is said to as many as have not ‘this doctrine’, and have not known the ‘depths of Satan’. The church at Sardis has some ‘defiling’ tendencies at work within it, and the synagogue of Satan figures again in the church of Philadelphia.

The way in which the doctrine of Balaam is linked with the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes suggests a connection between them. We know from Old Testament history, as well as the details given in Revelation 2:14, what the ‘doctrine of Balaam’ was. When we realize that Bal-aam means ‘lord of the people’, and Nikos-laos means ‘conqueror of the people’, we shall possibly perceive that the doctrine of Balaam is the type of the future apostasy of which the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes is the fulfilment or antitype. At the time of the end we see indicated by these
epistles a movement set on foot to promote the making of the covenant between Israel and the false christ; to accomplish this end the wicked one introduces his ‘tares’, and among the true worshippers at Ephesus are those who practise the abominable deeds of the Nicolaitanes. It would also appear that an attempt had been made to impose upon them an order of false apostles; these had been tried and found to be liars. The deeds of the Nicolaitanes had been also treated with commendable hatred. It would seem from the words of the Lord to the church in Smyrna, that Satan, defeated in his first attempt, resorts to more violent methods. Those who said they were apostles, and were not, are replaced by those who say that they are Jews, and are not; this seems to indicate an attempt to swamp the faithful by numbers of false professors. There is also evidence that persecution is to be stirred up against these faithful ones; the devil is to cast some into prison, and a ten days’ tribulation, culminating apparently in the martyrdom of many, will prevail.

At Pergamos we have Satan’s throne; there he will dwell. The ‘deeds’ of the Nicolaitanes have now become the ‘doctrine’ of Balaam or of the Nicolaitanes. It appears that prison and persecution having failed to promote the design of the false christ, persuasion is next attempted. Balaam, who failed to curse Israel from the top of the mountain, taught Balak a most effective way to ensnare that separate people. The church at Pergamos is to be enticed through the medium of the flesh; they will be enticed first of all to eat things sacrificed to idols, and then to the most abominable excesses that have ever been cloaked under the title of religion. By the time we reach the central church, we reach the period when the dread covenant with hell and death will be made, and the covenant with Israel broken. The harlot nation is exalted by the beast and is fitly typified by the false prophetess, ‘that woman Jezebel’. Verse 20 compared with verse 14 shows the plague spreading; here we reach the ‘depths of Satan’.
Death and defilement are visible in the church at this time, a name to live, and ready to die, are the words of the Lord. A few had not defiled their garments, but it seems that many had fallen into the snare. The church in Philadelphia and the church in Laodicea seem set in contrast as indicating the end, the one faithful and overcoming is kept out of the hour of temptation, the other is about to be spewed out of the Lord’s mouth. No greater picture of their moral rottenness could be presented than is done by this reference to the nausea caused by the condition of the church.

Both Peter and Jude refer to the ‘error of Balaam’ as prophetic of the end, and while there are many things dealt with in these epistles, the gradual leavening of the churches by the evil doctrine and deeds of the ‘conquerors of the people’ seems to underlie most of the failure and the opposition.

A comparison between the story of these churches with the history of Israel in the past is very helpful, and readers will find much profit in studying the work of the late Dr. Bullinger, *The Apocalypse, or the Day of the Lord*, on this subject. The progress also of the promises, starting with the tree of life in the paradise of God, including the wilderness by the references to the manna, and Balaam, and ending with the kingdom, throne, city, and temple, is also helpfully treated in the same work.

In the midst of the trials and temptations by which the church will be surrounded in the Day of the Lord, the faithful are warned and encouraged by having their remembrances of the Lord’s dealings with their fathers brought vividly before them, and of the prophecies that point on to the ‘rest that remaineth’ for those who ‘endure to the end’.

In conclusion, may we point out that the overcomer is the one to whom the final words are addressed, whatever state the church may be in as a whole, whether commended or spoken of as being dead, whether faithful
or being merely lukewarm. To the individual among them the Lord addresses words of encouragement and cheer. The varying experiences of these overcomers are traced through the remaining chapters of the Revelation; they continually appear either as a persecuted and suffering people, or as raised and crowned and victorious.

While we do not believe that the seven churches or the Revelation as a whole speak of the Church of the Mystery, they speak to it. There are lessons of parallel failings, and parallel triumphs, which it is wise for us all to receive with meekness.
CHAPTER 6
The Throne Set in Heaven
Revelation 4

In turning to the teaching of the fourth chapter, we commence the study of the great sevenfold centre of the book. On page 114 will be found the structure of the Revelation as a whole, and the central number, occupying chapters 4 to 20 is made up of a series of seven pairs of visions, the first in each pair being something seen or heard 'in heaven', the second being the result or effect 'on earth'.

The opening heavenly vision occupies chapters 4 and 5. The main features are connected with the throne, the book, the Lamb, and the living ones.

The structure is simple, and emphasizes the twofold theme of the section, together with the contrast intended to be observed between the elders and the living ones, and the Lamb.

The first vision in heaven (4 and 5)
B 8-11. The saying of the living ones and elders—Creation.
B 8-14. The song of the living ones and elders.
The saying of angels.—Redemption.

From chapter 1:10 to the end of chapter 3 the apostle had been 'in the spirit'. As the second verse of chapter 4 tells us that he was again 'in spirit', we have sufficient indication that we are dealing with a new vision. The words, 'after this', do not necessarily mean that chapter 4 succeeds chapter 3 in order of fulfilment. John hears through the open door of heaven the former voice which he had heard sounding like a trumpet (1:10) speaking with him, and saying, 'Come up hither, and I will shew thee what things must come to pass hereafter'. 'Immediately I
came to be in spirit', continues the writer, 'and, behold a throne was set in heaven'. Let it be duly pondered, that at the forefront of this central section we have brought into prominence a THRONES SET IN HEAVEN. It is the Day of the Lord, a day of justice, of vengeance, of reward. The Revelation is the book of the throne. Thronos occurs 61 times in the New Testament, 15 of these occurrences are apportioned between the books of Matthew to Jude, the remaining 46 occurrences being found in the Revelation, or more than three times as many as the rest of the New Testament. It is not the standing or atmosphere of the church. The throne set in heaven is the central, governing fact of the Revelation. We dare not hurry over our exposition, every item in this opening vision being pregnant with meaning, and containing illumination for the remainder of the visions.

The opening vision of chapter 1, which spoke of Him Who ruled among the churches, showed us the vision of One Who was heaven's Priest. The vision that now opens, shows us the throne of heaven's Judge and King. It is suggestive of the change of subject to note the difference carefully.

Chapter 1

The voice as a trumpet.

I saw seven golden lampstands. In the midst ... One like the Son of man clothed with a garment down to the foot, girded with a golden girdle, hair like wool and snow, eyes like flame of fire, feet like burnished copper, voice like many waters.

Chapter 4

The voice as a trumpet.

Behold, a throne was set in heaven. One sat thereon. He was like a jasper and a sardine stone: there was a rainbow round the throne like an emerald; lightnings, thunderings and voices.

In chapter 1, John sees no other beside the Son of man, but in chapter 4 there are many accompaniments of kingly state. To realize the prophetic import of the words, 'a throne set up in heaven', we must turn a while to the Old Testament Scriptures. Psalm 103:19-22 is parallel; we not
only have the throne set, but the call to the heavenly powers to bless the Lord, as they do in Revelation 4, ‘The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all’.

Proud Nebuchadnezzar had to learn that ‘the Most High ruleth among the kingdoms of men’, and John, who was to behold in vision the awful days of tribulation, apostasy, and blasphemy, is shown first of all the throne, that he may know, and that we may know, that all is still within the hollow of His hand, and that ‘that day’ shall vindicate the wisdom, the righteousness and the holiness of Him Who sitteth upon the throne. This is brought out very fully in Psalm 11. There the psalmist says that in the Lord he had put his trust, and the wicked are about him ready to shoot privily at the righteous. ‘If’, says he, ‘the foundations be destroyed’ (as they must be when the righteous are persecuted and the wicked triumph) ‘what can the righteous do?’ For answer he continues, ‘the LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD’s throne is in heaven’; he also summarizes in verse 6 the plagues of the Revelation, ‘Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup’.

The cluster of Psalms 93 to 99 are worthy of close study in relation to our subject; we can give only one or two notes as specimens:

‘The LORD reigneth, He is clothed with majesty’ (93:1).
‘O LORD God to Whom vengeance belongeth ... shew Thyself’ (94:1).
‘O sing unto the LORD a new song ... for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth’ (96:1-13).
‘The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice ... righteousness and judgment, are the habitation of His throne’ (97:1,2).
‘The LORD reigneth;
Let the people tremble:
He sitteth between the cherubim;
Let the earth be moved’ (99:1).
The balance of thought between the ‘reigning’ and the ‘sitting between the cherubim’ is suggestive, especially in the light of Revelation 4.

Daniel 7:9-14 seems to speak of this throne:

‘I beheld till the thrones were cast down (set), and the Ancient of days did sit, Whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire ... the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

... I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him’.

The importance of the vision of the throne ‘set’ will be appreciated in proportion as we realize the awful character of the time of the end. To us, believers of an entirely different dispensation, the passage is not wanting in its lesson, surrounded as we may be by wickedness and strife. It is our peace to know that, unseen and unknown, the Lord is at the right hand of the majesty on high. To us, as to all of every time, the words come, ‘Be still, and know that I AM GOD’, not merely, I am a Deliverer, or a Provider, or a King, or a Consoler, but I AM GOD — to know this, is to reach the goal of our being, and to have learned the lesson of the ages.

The eyes of John were first of all directed to see ‘a throne’, but a throne, to indicate authority and power, must be occupied, consequently the writer adds, ‘and One sat on the throne’. The appearance of this One is described, and the special accompaniment of the rainbow is given. Then John saw not only one throne, but surrounding that throne twenty-four thrones; he notes their occupants and accompaniments, this time thunder and lightning instead of a rainbow. Again he returns to the throne, and in the midst and round about he sees four living ones. This threefold description is clearly seen in the structure given, namely, 4:2-8, the throne, elders, and living ones:
Revelation 4:2-8

B1 3. Appearance. Like jasper and sardine stone.
C1 3,4. Accompaniment.
   Rainbow and twenty-four thrones.
C2 5,6. Accompaniments.
   Lightnings, thunderings, voices,
   seven lamps, sea of glass.
A3 6. In midst of throne. Four living ones.
B3 7. Appearance. Like lion, calf, man, and flying eagle.
C3 8. Accompaniments.
   Threefold ascription of holiness.

The words, 'He that sat upon the throne', must not be passed over without consideration. So often do they occur, and in such a manner, that the words indicate a definite title, and give a special character to the Revelation. The solemnity of the words and acts recorded in this book, and their judicial character, are emphasized by the continual reference to Him that sat upon the throne. In strong contrast will be seen the one who 'sits upon many waters', 'upon a scarlet coloured beast', 'upon seven mountains', and who said 'I sit a queen' (17:1,3,9,15; 18:7).

The first reference to sitting on a throne is in chapter 3:21, where the Lord speaks of His sitting with His Father in His throne. The reader should carefully note the following passages, observing the various things that are related to the One Who occupies this glorious throne (5:1,7,13; 6:16; 7:10,15; 19:4, and 20:11). It will be specially profitable to compare and ponder the opening reference (4:2 but see also 5:1,2), with the closing reference (20:11,12); with both there is importance attached to books being opened.

The appearance of the One that sat upon the throne is said to have been like 'a jasper and a sardine stone'. Jasper is the first foundation stone of the New Jerusalem,
and the sardius the sixth; jasper was the last stone in the High Priest’s breastplate. Exodus 24:10 says:

‘And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness’.

Ezekiel 1:22 seems to refer to this (see verse 26), and speaks of it as ‘the terrible crystal’. Ezekiel 28:13, describing the ‘anointed cherub’, speaks of his covering being composed of nine precious stones together with gold. The reference to precious stones, and the statement that the One Who sat upon the throne was like them, indicates that like all else in this creation they have their place as types of unseen spiritual realities.

Encircling the throne, and possibly partially veiling the glory of the One that sat upon it, was a rainbow, ‘in sight like unto an emerald’. The green of the rainbow may well stand for mercy. This throne of righteousness, from which will go forth the commands of judgment, has also a sign of mercy; it is the fulfilment of Habakkuk’s plea, ‘in wrath remember mercy’. For the encouragement of the faithful few, the rainbow encircles the throne. The days foreshadowed by the days of Noah are imminent, a deluge of wrath is about to fall, but the Lord remembers His covenant, and the rainbow is seen. The day of grace has come to its end when this throne is seen, the Day of the Lord with its judgments and its terrors is about to begin; yet it is well to remember that all the judgments and plagues proceed from the throne, all is ordered by heaven’s Ruler, nothing is by chance or hap. It is certainly a fact for rejoicing in such an hour to know that when the Apocalypse with its most awful scenes becomes history, there, in unsullied light and unruffled calm reigns the One ‘Who sitteth on the throne’.

Having considered something of the majesty of Him who sat upon the throne, we now observe that around the throne are ranged 24 other thrones. The 12 apostles will sit upon 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). Thrones are a part of creation, both those in
heaven, and those on the earth (Col. 1:16). Satan has a throne (Rev. 2:13; 13:2), so also has the Beast (16:10), although the Authorized Version renders the word ‘seat’. The thrones that are spoken of as those of the 12 apostles have direct reference to ‘judging’ the 12 tribes; ‘judging’ of course does not necessarily mean ‘condemning’ for a judge acquits as well as pronounces sentence. The 24 thrones therefore seem to have some such purpose. This is further suggested by noticing who they are that sit upon the thrones, ‘I saw four and twenty elders’. The word translated ‘elder’ is presbuteros, and both among Gentiles and Jews the word conveys the idea of dignity, rule and wisdom. It will be remembered that Moses chose 70 men who bore ‘with him the burden of the people’. There were elders in the early church, and these held positions of responsibility (Titus 1:5). The number 24 takes us back to the days of David and the temple. 1 Chronicles 24:3-18 gives the 24 courses of the priests; there were also the same number of prophets appointed (25:1-31); there were also 24 porters appointed from the Levites (1 Chron. 26:17-19). Twenty-four, therefore, seems to be closely associated with the administration of the temple in the days of the kingdom. As Moses made the tabernacle after the heavenly pattern shown to him, so David also was divinely instructed regarding the details of the temple and its appointments. ‘All this (including the courses of the priests 1 Chron. 28:13), said David, the LORD made me to understand in writing by His hand upon me’ (1 Chron. 28:19). David addressing Solomon said, ‘Behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites, even they shall be with thee for all the service of the house of God’ (1 Chron. 28:21).

In Revelation 1 we have seen the risen Lord in His High-priestly robes; here, in chapter 4, we see the heavenly elders who take part in the administration of heavenly worship. These heavenly elders are seen clothed in white raiment, which raiment indicates righteousness. There are considerably more references to ‘white’ in the Revelation than in the rest of the New Testament; the white robes, the
white throne speak of a day of righteousness. The elders moreover are crowned with crowns of gold; this indicates that they not merely sit upon thrones, but are recognized rulers having dominion. To add to the majesty and solemnity of the scene, and also to indicate that here is not a throne of grace, the apostle says, 'And out of the throne proceed lightnings and thunderings and voices'; the throne is set in the accompaniment of judgment and wrath, it recalls Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law:

'And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled' (Exod. 19:16).

In the Revelation itself the mention of thunder, lightning and voice is associated with judgment (8:5; 11:19; 16:18). Before the throne seven lamps were seen burning, which are the seven spirits of God (Rev. 4:5). These seven spirits have already been mentioned before in the Revelation; they are seen in the hand of Christ (3:1) and are associated with the seven stars, and seven angels in 1:16,20, and chapters 2 and 3. The seven spirits before the throne are linked with God and the Lord Jesus Christ in 1:4,5. Hebrews 1:7 says, 'He maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire'. In Revelation 5:6 the seven spirits are sent forth into all the earth, and are there likened to 'seven eyes'. Here then is the throne set for judgment, with all in perfect readiness. One other item is mentioned, 'and before the throne, as a glassy sea, like crystal'; this is very similar to the description given by Ezekiel in 1:22, 'And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature, was as the colour of the terrible crystal'; or in Exodus 24:10, 'And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness'.

There is something encouraging to us in this description; in spite of all the turmoil, blasphemy, plagues and sin, an unruffled sea like crystal stretches out before the throne, all is calm there. If this can be so in the day of
judgment, much more so may it be in this day of grace. May we ever remember that our peace and safety are to be found there at the right hand of God, not here, where sin and death still carry on their dreadful rule.

In the structure of this first vision (see page 191) the Throne alternates with the saying or the song of those around and before it. Verses 8-11 of chapter 4 record first the ‘saying’ of the living ones, and the response of the four and twenty elders.

Let us approach this subject with some degree at least of appreciation that we stand upon holy ground. ‘The four living ones had each of them six wings about him’. In no description of the cherubim in the Old Testament do we find any reference to their having six wings, neither do they speak, as do the living ones in this chapter. In Isaiah 6 we read of the seraphim; these are connected with the throne.

‘Each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory’ (Isa. 6:2,3).

The seraphim are associated with mercy:

‘Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged’ (Isa. 6:6,7).

In contrast with this we read in Ezekiel 10 of the cherubim being associated with the scattering of coals of fire in judgment. The departing and returning glory in Ezekiel, together with the placing of the cherubim at the garden of Eden, link them with righteousness as well as mercy. It has been suggested that the apparent merging of the characteristics of both cherubim and seraphim in the Revelation, is an indication that ‘righteousness and peace have kissed each other’. These living ones we read, in Revelation 4:8, ‘rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was, and Who is, and Who
is coming’. This is the first of a series of utterances that punctuate the book, and therefore it is of importance to notice what the theme of this first utterance is. It is an ascription of holiness to the Lord. Foremost of all the attributes of Him who occupies that awful throne in the Day of the Lord is holiness. Holiness is akin to righteousness, but whereas righteousness may seem cold, holiness burns with white heat. The self-righteous man may be found who will speak of his own uprightness and integrity, his honesty and his truthfulness, but few will be found to speak of their own holiness. This is the sacred and peculiar attribute of God, and of this the living ones unceasingly tell.

In verse 9 we read, ‘and when these living ones give glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the throne’. How are we to understand this? Verse 8 has already told us that they ‘rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy’. It would therefore seem to imply that this threefold ascription of holiness was also the threefold glory, honour and thanks which they give to Him. To speak unceasingly of the holiness of Him who sits on that throne is to ‘give glory’. To tell of His holiness is to honour Him, and to ascribe holiness to Him is to offer thanksgiving. Nothing can be to His glory that forgets or omits the recognition of His holiness. We cannot honour Him if we do not with reverence and regard remember that we stand on holy ground.

The effect of these words of the living ones upon the four and twenty elders is to cause them to fall down and worship, casting their crowns before the throne, saying:

‘Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power: for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created’ (Rev. 4:11, R.V.).

Creation and its purpose form the basis of the elders’ utterance. The living ones spoke of what the Lord is — holy, the elders of what He has done — creation.
We have elsewhere called attention to the logical connection established in the book of Job between God's creative power and righteousness. Here, the living ones and elders link holiness, glory, honour and power with creation. Creation as it is, as well as what it will be; creation that groans and that has been subjected to vanity; creation in its present bondage as well as its future liberty is a manifestation of His holiness, and is for His will. Puny man, with defective logic and a specious humanitarianism, would draw conclusions from his conception of the love of God that would not allow the Scriptural logic of Job or Revelation a place. 'The things that are made' are divinely intended to teach 'that which may be known of God, even His eternal power and Deity' (Rom. 1:19,20). 'The heavens declare the glory of God', and we are not allowed by the Scriptures to brush aside the many strange and apparently opposite elements in creation to conjure up some Utopia of our own, whose God would have to repudiate the works of His hands, or change the meaning of His attributes. The present creation is the work of a holy and a righteous God; it is a necessary link in the chain of His purpose, and supplements and illustrates the teaching of the Word. The Authorized Version reads, 'for Thy pleasure they are and were created'. The word rendered 'pleasure' is almost always rendered 'will'. This is a striking introduction. Creation will seem to have become in the Day of the Lord almost universally given over to evil. The words before the throne give us the aspect of those who see that which at present only eyes of faith can discern. They see creation still beneath His control. Creation was for His will; it shall accomplish His will, His holy will, in spite of all appearances and opposition. As to how it will do so may await further light and higher knowledge, but that it will do so is comfort to our hearts in days of stress and evil.

Let us test every theory regarding creation and its purpose by the utterances of those nearest the Throne. First, ever remember that He who created all things, all, whatever their kind or function, is essentially holy, and
secondly, let us remember that all was created 'for His will'. Creation is a part of the great purpose of the Lord God Almighty, and must be so viewed.

With this preparation we are introduced to a scene that takes us one step nearer to the great theme of the Revelation. 'Thou art worthy' (cried the elders in reference to creation), 'to receive glory and honour and power'. We shall hear that cry again when in chapter 5 the theme shall change from creation to redemption. Such an ascription we render unto Him now, during the time of His rejection.
CHAPTER 7

The Sealed Book

Revelation 5

Having described the throne, the living ones, and the elders, and having recorded the utterances of these heavenly beings, the apostle recalls our attention to the throne, and what is taking place there.

The right hand of the glorious occupant of the throne held a scroll that had been written inside, and on the back, and which had been sealed with seven seals. What is the meaning of this sealed book? The answer is found by observing what happens when the seals are broken and the scroll unrolled. Chapter 6 describes the opening of six of the seals, and it will be seen that the sixth seal takes us to the day of judgment (6:12-17), ‘the great day of His wrath is come’.

The opening of the seventh seal introduces the seven trumpets, and at the beginning of the seventh trumpet ‘the mystery of God should be finished’ (10:7). When the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, the following words are heard, ‘the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign unto the ages of the ages’ (11:15). This is linked with the theme of the seventh seal by the words of verse 18, ‘Thy wrath is come’. It is also the time for the judgment of the dead, the apportioning of rewards, and the destruction of those who destroy the earth. This is none other than ‘the revelation of Jesus Christ’, for the wrath is the wrath of the Lamb, the King who reigns is Christ, and all judgment is committed into the hands of the Son.

Let us turn to the book of Daniel. We have already referred to Daniel 10 when comparing the vision and its effects on Daniel as recorded in that chapter with the description of the Lord and the effects upon John in Revelation 1.
In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision" (Dan. 10:1).

Then follow three weeks' mourning and fasting. Evidently 'the thing' and 'the vision' were something to cause sadness. The vision of a man clothed in linen next appeared to Daniel, and after reviving the trembling saint he tells him that he has come 'to make him understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days'. The whole of chapter 11, therefore, must refer primarily to the 'latter days', and must be concerning a period that was 'many days' from the days of Daniel.

To us, this settles the vexed question as to where in chapter 11 the yet future begins and past history ceases. Chapter 12 tells us that:

'At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, those to aionion life, and those to shame and aionion contempt' (Dan. 12:1,2 author's translation).

The note of time, places the fulfilment of this prophecy in the yet future, and links it with Revelation 12 (Michael), 7 (the great tribulation), 13 (the book and deliverance), and 20 (the resurrection). Daniel is then told 'to shut up the words, and seal the book unto the time of the end'; so also in verse 9. We are definitely told that the 'thing', which together with the 'vision' occupies chapter 11, was revealed to Daniel, and that he understood both the thing and the vision. Moreover, we read that to make Daniel understand was the object of the words of the man clothed in linen: this being so, we have no choice but to believe that Daniel did understand. The shutting up of the 'words' and the sealing of the 'book' therefore can have no reference to the question of his understanding.
Daniel has been spoken of as the book sealed, and the Revelation as the book opened. This, while being true, is misleading when used to teach that what is baffling, mysterious, and difficult in Daniel is clear and plain in the Revelation. The Apocalypse is not generally reckoned to be so clear and plain, and those who have studied both books would be the ones to confess that the Revelation is the more difficult to understand of the two. The sealing is ‘to the time of the end’. This ‘time of the end’ did present a problem to Daniel, a problem that was not solved, and for which the Revelation does supply the solution.

When we consider Revelation 5 and note the call for one who should be worthy enough to open the seven seals, we shall there find that the idea of interpreting Daniel’s prophecies, as put forward by some, can hardly fit the occasion. Angels were worthy enough to give the prophecies and to interpret them before; something more than interpretation is involved in the scene before us.

Let us get one more preparation before we consider Revelation 5 in detail. This time we turn to Luke 4. The Lord had been tempted, among other things, with the immediate possession of ‘the kingdoms of the habitable world’, but had refused the offer. Then we read that:

‘Coming to Nazareth ... He entered the Synagogue ... and stood up for to read, and there was given to Him the book of the Prophet Isaiah, and when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written,

‘The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

‘AND HE CLOSED THE BOOK ... and He began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears’ (Luke 4:16-21 author’s translation).

What is there remarkable here? If we turn to the prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-3, we shall find that the Lord ‘closed the book’ before He had finished the passage; Isaiah’s words are:
‘the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness’ (Isa. 61:2,3).

In Nazareth, the place that symbolized His utter rejection, He closed the book without speaking of the day of vengeance. The day of vengeance is not for the lowly man of sorrows; that is reserved for the Lion of the tribe of Judah. When the prophet sees that day, the imagery is of greatness and power:

‘Glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength ... mighty to save ... the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed is come’ (Isa. 63:1,4).

Both chapters 61 and 63 link the day of vengeance with the blessing of Israel. The Lord is here set before us as the gaal, the kinsman-redeemer, and the revenger of blood. It is important to remember that the word gaal is not only translated redeemer, but also avenger (see Num. 35:19). We may read in the book of Ruth concerning the kinsman-redeemer, and the custom and law relating to the gaal should be studied carefully in order to appreciate fully the fulfilment in Christ.

The opening of the seals does not interpret any veiled statements of Daniel 11 and 12 so much as to put into operation the awful judgments that fall (Rev. 6) before the Lord takes the kingdom and delivers His people. No one but Christ Himself in heaven or earth or under the earth could assume such an awful responsibility as the letting loose upon this earth the long pent up wrath of God. John wept much when no one was found worthy, not that he was disappointed that the judgments would not fall, but because he knew that these days of vengeance meant redemption for his people.

This twofold theme is developed throughout the remainder of the book, and the right division of the word of Truth, as indicated by the Lord in the synagogue of Nazareth, tells us that when the Revelation is in process of
fulfilment, the ‘acceptable year’ will have passed and the ‘day of vengeance’ will have come. The Church occupies a day of grace, and to bring the Church into this setting of judgment is to confuse things that differ.

Three times in the Revelation we read of a ‘mighty (strong) angel’. In 10:1, ‘another strong angel’ is seen coming down from heaven; he had in his hand a little scroll opened and swore that ‘time’ should be no longer. Then follows immediately the reference to the seventh angel and the finishing of the mystery of God. In verse 21 of chapter 18, ‘a strong angel’ takes up a great millstone, and casts it into the sea, symbolising thereby the sudden destruction of Babylon. In Revelation 5, the chapter before us, ‘a strong angel’ proclaims with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?’ (verse 2). No one was found in the whole universe ‘in heaven, in earth, or under the earth’ who was worthy. The apostle must have realized the great importance of the scroll which was held in the hand of Him who sat on the throne, for one of the elders said to him, ‘Weep not! Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals of it’ (verse 5). When John looked to the throne once again, in order to see the prevailing Lion, he beheld, ‘and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living ones, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain’ (verse 6). The elder says the Lion, but John sees a LAMB.

When Jacob gathered his sons together to tell them what should befall them in the last days, those sons concerning whom most is said, and who include in their forecast references to either Christ or Antichrist, are Judah, Dan and Joseph; this will be most readily seen if we just present the outline of Jacob’s prophecy as follows:
### Genesis 49:3-27

| A₁ 3-7          | a Reuben. Water.  
|                | b Simeon. Scattered.  
|                | c Levi. Divided.  
| B₁ 8-12         | d Judah. The LION.  
|                | e The Sceptre. Shiloh.  
|                | b Issachar. Rest.  
| B₂ 16-18        | d Dan. The Serpent and Adder.  
|                | e Salvation.  
| A₃ 19-21        | a Gad. Troop.  
|                | b Asher. Bread.  
|                | c Naphtali. Hind.  
| B₃ 22-26        | d Joseph. Fruitful bough.  
|                | e The Shepherd. The Stone.  
| A₄ 27           | Benjamin. Wolf.  

Judah is the tribe whose latter day prophecy links it with the prevailing Lion, and with the sceptre, lawgiver and Shiloh. The One who had prevailed to open the scroll was moreover, 'The Root of David'. This title, taken together with that of Revelation 22:16, 'I am the Root and the Offspring of David', is often explained by saying that Christ was not only the son of David (the offspring), but also as the root whence David sprang. We rejoice to know that He who was David’s son was also David’s Lord, but in what special way David sprang from Christ we fail to see in Scripture; neither is there any need for such an idea. The 'root' of David seems to be an allusion, if not a direct reference back, to Isaiah 11:1, 'And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots'; the stem really means the stump of a tree after it has been cut down, and the figure exactly fits the apparent destruction of the royal line of David in our Lord's day. Christ is the branch that grows out of his roots, for, in verse 10, the prophet continues, 'And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse ... to it shall the Gentiles seek'. If the title, 'the Root of David', denotes the source from whence David sprang, and not the same as the offspring of David, then 'the Root of Jesse' indicates the
same. All are agreed, however, that ‘the Root of Jesse’ is but another way of speaking of Him who should ‘grow out of his roots’. Malachi 4:1 shows that ‘root’ as well as ‘branch’ is used to indicate posterity. The prophecy of the Apocalypse is far more concerned to show the fulfilment of the promise concerning the Seed of David, than it is to prove the deity of Christ.

The Lord is seen as the great King, prevailing as the Lion of Judah, concerning whom alone a sceptre is mentioned, and as the Root of David who, being raised from the dead, sits on David’s throne.

One further and all-important truth is revealed in the vision concerning this kingly overcomer. The Lion of Judah and the Root of David, is the Lamb of God. When He first came amongst men as the sent One of God, He came not as a Lion, but was pointed out as the ‘Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world’. When John beholds Him in His risen glory, he still sees Him not as a Lion, but as the Lamb; when the day of His wrath comes, and strikes terror in the breast of all, we read of the wrath of the Lamb, not the Lion; when the marriage of heaven’s King is announced, it is the marriage of the Lamb, not the Lion. More pointedly, perhaps, is the first verse of chapter 6, where it is the Lamb who opens the seals, although the elder said it was the Lion (Rev. 5:5). We are not to understand that He who once was the Lamb has now become the Lion. No, the Lamb it is that is seen right through the prophecy, the Lion never. Christ as the Lamb fulfils all the prophecies that speak of Him as Lion and King. The Lamb bears the marks of sacrifice, ‘standing as having been slain’. Without the redemption concerning which the slain Lamb speaks, the throne of David would remain vacant, and the Lion of Judah would never be known. Heaven is about to burst forth in a new song, and it is to the Lamb they sing, and of His redemption, not to the Lion and of his strength.

Throughout the Scriptures there runs the teaching that is summed up in this vision of the enthroned Lamb. Man
by nature would give the battle to the strong. God has throughout glorified humility and meekness, everything in fact that goes with a lamb-like character. Those who suffer, overcome; while those who appear before their fellows as the greatest conquerors have suffered the greatest of defeats.

'Through weakness and defeat,
He won the meed and crown,
Trod all His foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down'.

The Lamb, however, is living when John looks toward the throne. Blessed be God, He was dead, but behold He is alive for evermore. Without the resurrection the Lamb had died in vain. Resurrection is as vital to the fulfilment of the promises made to David concerning his earthly throne and city as it is to the Church of the One Body. Peter, in Acts 2, speaking of David, says:

'Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that ... He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ' (Acts 2:30,31. See also 13:34).

Christ as the Lamb in resurrection is seen possessed of 'all power in heaven and earth', for John saw the Lamb 'having seven horns and seven eyes'. Omnipotence and omniscience are here symbolized, and a reference back to Zechariah 3:9 and 4:10 will show that Israel's restoration and forgiveness is near. The seven eyes are further described as the seven spirits of God, and these have already been spoken of in Revelation 1:4 and 4:5, and linked (see 3:1) with the seven angels of the seven churches. John saw this One take the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sitteth on the throne. This One, alone in all the wide universe, was worthy to do so.

A close parallel in many ways is found in Daniel 7:9-14. There is seen the throne, and the glory of Him who sat thereon. There books were opened, and:
'One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him' (Dan. 7:13,14).

At this stage it is necessary to give a rendering that shall contain the essential and important alterations to the Authorized Version in accordance with the readings of the critical Greek Texts.

'And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, because Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God, by Thy blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation and didst make them to our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign over the earth' (Rev. 5:9,10).

A new song! What song is it that Scripture calls new? Psalm 96 commences with the words, 'O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD all the earth', and concludes with, 'for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth'. The next Psalm opens with the words, 'The LORD reigneth', while Psalm 98 commences with the words, 'O sing unto the LORD a new song', and concludes with, 'for He cometh to judge the earth'. The next Psalm also commences with 'The LORD reigneth'.

The Companion Bible places these four Psalms together, making Psalms 97 and 99 the new song, which the preceding Psalms had summoned the people to sing. We give it for the benefit of those who do not possess a copy:

'New song', in Psalms 96 to 99

F 96. A summons to sing the 'new song'.
    'For He cometh' (Judgment).

G 97. The new song. 'Jehovah reigneth'.

F 98. A summons to sing the 'new song'.
    'For He cometh' (Judgment).

G 99. The new song. 'Jehovah reigneth'.

A new song is called for in the fourth Hallelujah Psalm 149; this speaks of 'the King' (verse 2), and also speaks of
Israel, and His saints who have the honour to execute ‘the judgment written’, thereby linking the redeemed nation with the Lord who cometh to judge the earth. In Isaiah 42:10, we again meet with a new song, this time closely connected with the ‘new things’ predicted in verse 9. These ‘new things’ begin to be unfolded in the next chapter; in 43:19 the Lord says, ‘Behold, I will do a new thing’, and the rest of the chapter, together with that following, emphasizes the future deliverance of Israel:

‘Sing, O ye heavens; for the L ORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the L ORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel’ (Isa. 44:23).

We read later of ‘a new name’ (Isa. 62:2), and ‘new heavens and a new earth’ (65:17). The new songs of Psalms and Isaiah are prophetic, they have never yet been sung. The new song of Revelation 5 seems to link all these prophetic songs together. The fact that the Lamb had prevailed and was worthy to open the seals was a proof that the long promised kingdom was about to be set up; this necessarily included the redemption of Israel, and the rule of the saints over the earth according to the promise given in Revelation 2:26,27, and leads on to the new Jerusalem, the new heaven and the new earth.

‘They sing a new Song’ (Rev. 5:9). This is the first song recorded in the New Testament! Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 being exhortations, not records. This new song opens with the words, ‘Thou art worthy’. It seems as though song had ceased on earth and in heaven whilst the Lord of glory stooped to die, and not until the moment comes for the rejected One to take unto Himself His great power, does the songless silence break, and heaven once more ring with harmony. Seven times does this word worthy (axios) occur in the Revelation, and in the following order:
axios, ‘worthy’ in Revelation

A 3:4. They shall walk in white, for they are worthy.

B 4:11. Thou art worthy to receive glory.

C 5:2. Who is worthy to open the book?

D 5:4. No man was found worthy.

C 5:9. Thou art worthy to take the book.

B 5:12. Worthy is the Lamb to receive power.

A 16:6. Given them blood to drink, for they are worthy.

The worthiness of the Lamb is ascribed in verse 9, to His work of redemption, ‘Because Thou wast slain and didst purchase for God, by Thy blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation’. The Authorized Version reads, ‘and hast redeemed us’, but the word ‘us’ must be omitted. In verse 10 the Authorized Version reads, ‘and hast made us’ and ‘we shall reign’; the critical Greek text and the Revised Version read ‘them’ and ‘they’ for ‘us’ and ‘we’. The redemption spoken of, therefore, is not the redemption of the singers; they sing of the redemption of others. Who are the others that are redeemed? Are they the saved ones of all nations of the earth? No, this cannot be, for these redeemed ones are made ‘a kingdom and priests’, a destiny reserved for one nation only, namely, Israel. If this be so, the redemption spoken of is that of the dispersed Israel scattered among the nations.

The first Lamb slain for Israel redeemed them from the power of one nation and the oppressor — Pharaoh; this redemption was accompanied by miracles and wonders, many of them taking the form of plagues. The title, ‘the Root of David’, is suggestive of Isaiah 11:10, ‘the Root of Jesse’, which is closely connected with Israel’s second redemption, and here we find close parallel with ‘every tribe and tongue, and people and nation’, for:
‘It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, which shall be left ... from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth’ (Isa. 11:11,12).

This second redemption is going to have much that will echo the first redemption from Egypt (Isa. 11:16). The song of Moses followed the first, the new song celebrates the second.

In Exodus 34:10 we have a covenant given by the Lord, that before all the people of Israel He would do marvels, and marvels of such a character that it could be said they were such as had not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation. The word translated ‘marvels’ is used by the Lord with reference to the plagues wherewith He smote Egypt, ‘I will ... smite Egypt with all my wonders’, and also with the plagues threatened to Israel, ‘the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful’ (Deut. 28:59). The covenant of marvels finds its fulfilment in the Apocalypse; there Pharaoh finds his antitype in the Beast, and Egypt in the wide world; the first covenant written upon tables of stone finds its echo in the New Covenant written upon the fleshy tables of the heart, and the passover lamb finds its very image in the Lamb as it had been slain. The result of the purchase price paid by the Lamb is given in the new song, ‘and didst make them to our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign over the earth’ (Rev. 5:10).

The subject of the ‘kingdom of priests’ was dealt with in Chapter 3 under Revelation 1:6. There we saw that this priestly kingdom looked forward to the Millennium (Rev. 20:6; Isa. 61:6), and backward to the Exodus (Exod. 19:4-6). The scattered of Israel were addressed by Peter (1 Pet. 1:1,2), and to them at the Revelation (1 Pet. 1:3-13) the ‘royal priesthood’ is promised. These priestly kings ‘reign over the earth’. The glorious privilege of reigning with Christ, whether over the earth, or in the super-heavenlies far above all principalities and powers, is
for the overcomers, but sufficient has already been said upon this in *The Prize of the High Calling*. Such are promised that they shall sit with the Lord in His throne, they are to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and share the thousand years reign (see Rev. 2:26,27; 3:21; 20:4,6).

The earth, subjected to vanity since the days of Adam, and given over to Satan since the days of Nebuchadnezzar, is to be ruled in righteousness and finally delivered from the bondage of corruption; the initial act in this grand deliverance is the opening of the sealed book; this therefore calls forth the new song, and well may we hear its echo even now, realizing now 'the future on the instant'.

When the four living ones and the four and twenty elders had sung their new song, representing the innermost circle around the throne of heaven, its theme is taken up by the next order of created beings, the angels; here the number is so vast as to pass beyond definite enumeration, 'their number was ten thousands of ten thousands, and thousands of thousands'. These 'holy myriads' seem to be referred to in Jude 14, and Matthew 26:53. Daniel 7:10, to which we have referred before, speaks of those who surrounded the heavenly throne in similar language. 'Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him'. These angels are spoken of as being ministering spirits, and in connection with Israel they had many opportunities of realizing the problem of redemption. From the tremendous host of angels sound forth the words, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive:

* By the same Author and Publisher.
Power, and
Riches, and
Wisdom, and
Strength, and
Honour, and
Glory, and
Blessing’ (Rev. 5:12).

Here is a sevenfold ascription, detailing in heavenly joy the perfections of the Lamb that was slain.

Power.—He is worthy to receive power. The question is raised, Does this mean that He is worthy of having all these virtues and gifts bestowed upon Him? or is it that He is worthy of being praised as possessing them? That the Lord did possess power before His birth in Bethlehem we know, for Hebrews 1:3 speaks of Him as ‘upholding all things by the word of His power’. The Lord Himself, when He died on Calvary’s cross, ‘was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God’ (2 Cor. 13:4). That risen life marked Him off as ‘the Son of God with power’ (Rom. 1:4), and His resurrection was the source from which His believing children draw their power (Phil. 3:10).

In the three Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, the words of the Lord are recorded concerning His coming in the clouds with power and great glory. His High Priesthood is in the power of an endless life (Heb. 7:16). The host of heaven say that the Lamb is worthy to receive power. We take this here in a literal sense. The Lord had been exalted to the highest place of glory, graced with the name that is above every name, that at that name every knee should bow; here in Revelation 5 the myriads of adoring ministering spirits acclaim His worthiness to receive this sevenfold blessing. Power had been given to others, but how unworthy had they proved themselves to be of the trust. We read of the powers of the heavens which are to be shaken, the power of the enemy which was used for the hurt of human kind. There shall yet be manifested ‘power and signs and lying wonders’ in the earth, when the dragon gives to the beast ‘his power, and
his throne, and his great authority’ (2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:2). This last reference supplies the parallel with our subject; just as God will give to the Lamb ‘power’, and He is acclaimed as worthy to receive it, so the dragon at the last feels that in the beast he has one who is worthy to receive his power, and his throne; and just as the Lamb Who receives this power is ‘as it had been slain’, so of the beast it is written in Revelation 13:3,4:

‘And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded (same word "slain") to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?’

The parallel between these two passages is very marked and needs no further comment. The power given to the Lamb has special reference to His kingdom, and in chapter 11:17 we catch an echo of the new song, when the Lord God Almighty took to Himself His great power and reigned.

The same age-time lesson is here which we learnt from seeing a Lamb, as it had been slain, in the place where we might have expected a Lion. In all heaven and earth none is so worthy to receive power as the Lamb, and that Lamb the One who was dumb before His accusers and was crucified through weakness.

RICHES.—What we have said of power may also be said of riches; the Lord was rich, yet for our sakes became poor; He is worthy therefore to receive riches. When we try to think of the ‘riches in glory’, or ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ’, we cannot find words to express even our puny conceptions, but we glory in the fact that He Who sits upon heaven’s throne and rules this poor cursed earth in righteousness and peace, is worthy to receive the coveted power and riches which no one yet has possessed without failing somewhere in his stewardship. The gold that the Lord counselled Laodicea to buy, was ‘gold tried in the
fire, that thou mayest be rich’; such is the character of all the riches that He will receive.

So we may consider all the rest. The wisdom that is first pure, then peaceable, is His; the strength that is His will never be used but in the cause of righteousness. Honour and glory constituted His crown ‘for the suffering of death’ (Heb. 2:9), and His priesthood’s consecration on the mount of transfiguration (2 Pet. 1:17). Glory and honour also pertained to Him as the Son of man beneath Whose feet shall be subjected all things. Finally comes:

Blessing.— As we listen to this acclamation, our minds are impelled backward into the history of the past. We think of those who have received from God glory and honour, riches and wisdom, power and blessing. Among those that stand out in this connection are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar — yet, wide as the difference between these individuals may be, and worthy as some are of our imitation, all were creatures, and all were fallen, none were ‘worthy to receive’ the blessings that had been bestowed. How different it is with the Lamb of God! God blessed Adam, but how soon Adam involved himself and his seed in the curse! He was not worthy. God blessed Noah and his sons, but how soon the father’s curse falls! God gave wisdom to Solomon, yet consider his end! All, all are unworthy, heaven’s song is true, ‘Worthy is the Lamb’.

This song, begun in heaven, is taken up by all creation. From the heavenly side, power comes first, leading on to blessing; from the standpoint of universal creation, blessing comes first and might last. This fourfold ascription taken up by the wider circle of all created things in the four divisions of the universe (heaven, earth, under the earth, and sea), is addressed to ‘Him that sitteth upon the throne’, as well as ‘unto the Lamb’.

The universal praise that ascends to the throne, commencing with the four living ones, and the twenty-four elders, extending to the myriads of heaven’s angels, then
taken up in turn by every creature in every sphere of creation, is gathered up again from whence it came by the solemn Amen of the four living ones, and the worship of the four and twenty elders.

All is now ready, the Lamb has been acclaimed, He alone was worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals, the solemn hour has struck, and with the noise of thunder the Lamb opened one of the seals, and the 'day of vengeance' began.

Before passing on to the scenes of judgment, let us pause awhile to catch the joy and delight that seem to echo through the words of praise, 'for He is worthy, Amen and Amen'.
CHAPTER 8
The Beginning of Sorrows
Revelation 6

The Lamb has taken the seven-sealed book from the hand of Him who sits upon the throne, ten thousand times ten thousand have acclaimed His worthiness and ascribed to Him power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. The apostle now watches the opening of the seals, and describes what he sees as a result. It will be seen that the first six seals are opened consecutively and without pause, but a whole chapter intervenes between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals; we shall therefore give our attention to the six seals as contained in chapter 6.

It is at once evident upon reading this chapter through, that these six seals are divided between (1) judgments and (2) martyrdom:

The 6 seals of Revelation 6

A 1-8. The four horses.— Judgments under false Christ.
B 9-11. Martyrs.— Cry for vengeance.
A 12-17. Signs in heaven.— Wrath of the Lamb.

What are we to understand by these symbols? What volumes have been written in the attempt to interpret them! We do not intend wasting our limited space in refuting the interpretations of the ‘historic school’ (the various writers do that so completely themselves), but we would most humbly and sincerely seek to follow the inspired rule, and ‘explain spiritual things by spiritual words’, keeping within the covers of the book for all the material necessary for the interpretation. What help can we get regarding these four horses? Every one acquainted with the Minor Prophets (and such only can hope to begin to understand the imagery of the Apocalypse) will immediately turn to the prophecy of Zechariah. In chapter 1 of his prophecy, Zechariah says:
'I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. Then said I, O my lord, what are these? .... These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest' (Zech. 1:8-11).

Before reading on further, we will turn to the corresponding vision described in chapter 6:

'And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; and in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked to me, What are these, my lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth' (Zech. 6:1-5).

Coming back to chapter 1, we find that the narrative continues with a prayer for mercy upon Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah upon which the Lord had indignation for threescore and ten years. the Lord answered, using good and comfortable words. God reveals His jealousy for Zion, and His sore displeasure with the nations who had gone beyond the little displeasure of the Lord, and had 'helped forward the affliction'; the vision finishes with the promise that the Lord shall yet comfort Zion and shall yet choose Jerusalem. The vision of chapter 6 is preceded by the prophecy concerning the building of a house for the ephah in the land of Shinar (Babylon), and is followed by the prophecy concerning Christ who shall build the temple of the Lord.

We can now return to Revelation 6 and understand that the four horses and their riders are also 'the four spirits of the heavens'. By comparing chapters 6 and 7 and onwards, we find the following:
Revelation 6 and 7, and 8 to 19


B 6:9-11. The martyrs; the cry for vengeance; their fellow-servants to be killed; white robes to be given them.

C 6:12-17. Signs in heaven; the great day of wrath.

A 7:1-3. Four angels; commissioned to hurt the earth, the sea, and the trees.

B 7:4-17. The 144,000 sealed; the great multitude out of the great tribulation; white robes.

C Chapters 8 to 19. The seven trumpets and vials; the wrath of Almighty God.

It appears from this survey that the judgments represented by the four horsemen will really be the ministry of angels, and that the fellow-servants of the martyrs are the 144,000 sealed ones and the great multitude.

The wrath of the Lamb, the great day of wrath, the wonderful signs in the heavens, and the effect upon the kings, captains, and mighty men, epitomised under the sixth seal, are given at greater length and fuller detail in the chapters that follow, concluding with the personal coming of Christ, the wrath of Almighty God, and the kings, captains, and mighty men who suffer under this judgment, as shown in chapter 19.

We will now once more leave the book of the Revelation to obtain further light from the prophecy of Christ himself recorded in Matthew 24. There is an indirect link with Zechariah’s prophecy in the prophecy of Olivet, by the reference to the house being left desolate, and its stones being overthrown. The disciples asked the Lord, saying, “Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Thy coming (parousia) and of the end (sunteleia) of the age?” This threefold question receives a threefold answer, but the answers do not follow the order of the questions, but the reverse; the first answer deals with the end (sunteleia) of the age (verses 4-22); the second
answer deals with the sign of the coming (parousia) (verses 23-31); the third answer is the parable of the Fig Tree, which, by saying, ‘When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors’, answers the first question, ‘When shall these things be?’ (verses 32,33).

Let us now take note of the Lord’s answers in fuller detail. There shall be false Christs (verse 5). Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars ... the end (telos) not yet (verse 6). Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places (verse 7). All these are the beginning of sorrows (verse 8).

The disciples had asked, ‘What shall be the sign ... of the end of the world?’ The word ‘end’ here is the Greek sunteleia, a word in common use, occurring in the Septuagint at Exodus 23:16 and there translated ‘The feast of the ingathering’. The disciples evidently knew that harvest, set forth in type, the end of the age.

‘Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven’ (Matt. 24:29,30).

We turned, it will be remembered, to this prophecy for further light upon Revelation 6. By placing the records in parallel columns we shall easily see that Matthew 24 and Revelation 6 cover the same ground:

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We have now cleared the way for investigating the meaning of these signs; we have both the testimony of Matthew 24 and of Zechariah to prevent us from giving a second thought to the multitude of ‘fulfilments’ that have been culled from the history of Rome onwards, and find in the reference to Daniel 9 in Matthew 24 a point of time around which these events are grouped.

As members of the One Body we have a hope entirely unconnected with ‘signs’, yet the argument is irresistible, that if the signs of the consummation of the age are appearing upon the horizon (be they as yet no larger than a man’s hand), then our hope is so much nearer its realization. May we all live ... looking for that blessed hope.

Following the latest Greek texts, the first verse reads:

"And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living ones saying, as with a voice of thunder, Go!" (Rev. 6:1).

The words ‘and see’ are omitted and the verb erchomai being translated by either ‘come’ or ‘go’ the context alone can decide. If the living ones said ‘Come’, the response would be, ‘he came forth’; as it is, the wording is, ‘he went forth’, showing that the verb in this case is the command ‘Go!’

We have considered the teaching of the Old Testament prophecies, particularly Zechariah, in connection with these horsemen; we will now deal with the actual visions themselves.

In Matthew 24 we read not of one false christ, but many, not one war or one famine or one pestilence, but many. We shall, therefore, have to be careful when viewing these seals that we do not read anything of our own into them. There will be one false christ, and one false prophet when the end is in sight, but the ‘beginning’ of sorrows is ushered in by the many false christs — which are here symbolized under the figure of the white horse.
'A White Horse'.— Here is the parody of Revelation 19:11-16. There we read:

'And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war ... And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean' (Rev. 19:11-14).

The rider in Revelation 6 has a bow, and is thereby linked with another vision of the revelation of Christ, namely, Psalm 45:4,5, 'In Thy majesty ride prosperously ... Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies'. While the bow is of frequent mention in the Old Testament, it is mentioned only once in the New Testament. A passage from Hosea seems to point the meaning of the symbol:

'I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the LORD their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen' (Hosca 1:7).

This statement rules out the four horsemen of Revelation 6. These are not the divine instruments of Israel's restoration. What was true of the first inheritance will be true of the last.

'They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them ... I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me' (Psa. 44:3-6).

The false messiahs will be no saviours, they will go forth conquering in order that they might conquer. The object is here stated, 'in order that' (hina) he might conquer. Like the beast of Revelation 13 and like all his pre-shadowings down the age, these grasp at world dominion and seek it by right of conquest. The crown that is given to the rider is a triumphal crown (stephanos), indicating victory or conquest.

The next horseman that rides forth is seated upon a red horse. The horse symbolizes war. To the rider are given two things, the one a symbol of the other. It was given to
him to take peace from the earth in order that they should kill each other; and there was given to him a great sword. The sword is the first of God's great sore judgments:

'The sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast' (Ezek. 14:21).

When the true Christ was born, the angels said, 'on earth peace' (Luke 2:14), but the world despised Him, hated Him and crucified Him. The false Christ ushers in war, and takes peace away from the earth. No war ever fought will 'end war'; that is one of the awful mockeries of the times we live in. Nothing but the coming of the Prince of Peace will be sufficient guarantee that the nations shall 'learn war' no more. The peace is taken from the earth with a purpose, 'in order that they should kill each other'. Nation rises against nation, kingdom against kingdom, and wear themselves down in their blind hatred and impotence. All these things, as current events demonstrate, make the universal kingdom of the Beast a necessity, and a welcome proposition to the war-worn nations. One of the features connected with the great Dictator at the time of the end, will be a false peace. They shall say 'peace and safety' while catastrophe is imminent (1 Thess. 5:3). This threat is associated with the possession of some paralysing power, for the universal admission will be, 'Who is able to make war with him?' (Rev. 13:4). This power could well be some secret development of atomic weapons as the signs of the times indicate.

Following in natural sequence we have the black horse. Desire for conquest, then war, then famine; how true this order has always been. The rider of this horse holds neither a bow nor a great sword, he holds a balance in his hand. Black denotes famine in scriptural symbolism:

'Their visage is blacker than a coal ... they that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger: for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field'.

'We get our bread with the peril of our lives because of the sword of the wilderness. Our skin was black like an oven because of the terrible famine' (Lam. 4:8,9; 5:9,10).
The balance indicates the need of scrupulous care because of famine. When Ezekiel foreshadowed the siege of Jerusalem he had to eat his meat by ‘weight’, and his water he had to drink ‘by measure’ (Ezek. 4:9-11; see also verse 16 and 12:16-19). This is an expression in direct contrast with ‘eat and be full’ of Deuteronomy 6:11, etc. The extent and nature of the famine is indicated by the words, ‘one chœnin of wheat for a denarius, and three chœnixes of barley for a denarius’. A denarius was a day’s wage (Matt. 20:2,9), and a chœnix was nearly a quart (about 1.14 litres). Numerous citations from Greek writers show that this measure was the daily ration of a slave. An Attic medimnus* of grain cost five or six denarii. A chœnix was the forty-eighth part of a medimnus and cost one-eighth of a denarius. Here therefore is a statement of famine prices. The cost of daily food advanced to 800 per cent. The command also to injure not the oil and the wine indicates that extreme care must be taken with these by reason of the great shortage of the staff of life.

The fourth horse is described as pale. The word chloros means a colour like that of a young shoot of vegetation, i.e., a palish green; evidently a hue inclining to the cadaverous* is here meant (Moses Stuart, in loco). The name of the rider is given, ho thanatos, ‘death’, and in immediate association comes hades. Christ, by virtue of His redemption, claims the keys of death and hades. When the dead are raised to stand before the great white throne, we read, ‘death and hades gave up the dead which were in them’, and finally, ‘death and hades were cast into the lake of fire’ (Rev. 20:13,14). Both death and hades are spoken of as having a dominion. These forces and authorities of darkness are given a dreadful liberty of action in the closing days of the age.

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* An Attic medimnus is a dry volume measure equal to about one and a half bushels, or about 55 litres.
* Cadaverous = belonging to a corpse.
'And there was given to him authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth' (Rev. 6:8 author's translation).

To kill by 'death' is a figure, a figure indicating pestilence and plague, death in its most awful form. The Septuagint renders the Hebrew word for pestilence by *thanatos* ('death') more than thirty times, and so enables us to see the meaning of the word here.

We have in these four horsemen and their followers a series of symbols setting forth the sign of the *sunteleia* of the age and the 'beginning of sorrows'. War, famine, pestilence, wild beasts, with death and hades exercising their dread authority. What a blessing to know Him Who has the keys of death and hades, and to look across this darkening nightfall of a ruined world to the day when death and hades shall be cast into the great destructor together with all things that offend. These are the beginning of sorrows, but they do not last for ever. Greater judgments have yet to follow them, nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

The first four seals are connected together by the reference to the four living creatures. The fifth seal is not connected with them, and must be considered as a separate subject. While viewing this seal as something separate, we must remember that the words of verse 11 link this with the awful times of the first four seals.

'And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the Word of God, and because of the testimony which they held' (Rev. 6:9 author's translation).

An altar is literally 'a place of sacrifice'. It occurs in Revelation 8:3 and 5; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18 and 16:7. The first and last occurrences have much in common. We read that the third angel poured out his vial, and the angel of the waters said:
'Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, the holy One (see the Greek, and R.V.), because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments' (Rev. 16:5-7).

While this last reference is parallel with the first, the idea of judgment is connected with several of the remaining passages. The dispensation of grace, with its spirit of longsuffering and meekness, has led the enemies of truth to a fatal misunderstanding. The God who said, 'Avenge not yourselves', said also, 'Vengeance is Mine I will repay'. To the wicked, God said, 'These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself ... now consider ... lest I tear you in pieces' (Psa. 50:21,22). The long deferred 'day of vengeance' (see Luke 4:19,20) is linked with the comforting of Zion (Isa. 61:2,3). So also in Isaiah 63:4, 'For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed is come'. 'The day of the Lord's vengeance' is linked with 'the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion' (Isa. 34:8). The Kinsman-Redeemer is also the Avenger of blood, both in type and anti-type.

The opening of the fifth seal is marked with a cry for vengeance. The apostle says that he saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain. It surely indicates poverty of argument when such a passage is used to support the traditional teaching concerning the soul, and we do not remember ever reading that anyone who has used this passage to support the teaching of the soul’s conscious existence after death has ever brought together the seven occurrences of the word ‘soul’ in the Revelation. We do not believe that in such a book as the Revelation we shall find teaching concerning the nature of the soul, and as Moses Stuart remarks, 'It would be as apposite to undertake a demonstration that the trees and brambles can talk, from the fable of Jotham, as it would to undertake the proof of the material nature of the soul from the
representation before us'. The seven occurrences of *psyche* are:

'The souls of them that were slain' (6:9).
'The creatures which were in the sea, and had life died' (8:9).
'And they loved not their lives unto the death' (12:11).
'And every living soul died in the sea' (16:3).
'And slaves (of bodies), and souls of men' (18:13).
'The fruits that thy soul lusted after' (18:14).
'The souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus' (20:4).

The way in which the word is brought in, in 6:9 and 20:4, together with 12:11, should cause us to hesitate to generalize the passages, and in effect to render the word unnecessary. We believe a richer lesson lies awaiting us than can be discovered by considering this word merely as a figure of speech. There is a most definite doctrine of Scripture concerning the *soul* that has not received sufficient notice. We do not refer to the teaching of the Word as to the nature of the soul, but the teaching concerning the losing and saving of the soul:

'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life (soul) shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life (soul) for My sake shall find it' (Matt. 16:24,25).

In Hebrews 10:39 we read, 'But we are not of those shrinking back unto destruction; but of faith unto obtaining (as of a purchased possession, Eph. 1:14) of soul'. This is directly connected with, 'taking joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance', and is illustrated by the examples of Hebrews 11 (see verses 8,9,10,24–26), and in Hebrews 12:2, by the greatest example of all. The giving up in this life is rewarded by joy in the next life. The losing of the soul here ensures the finding of it there. 1 Peter 1:9 links the salvation of the soul with the theme of suffering followed by glory, 'of which salvation', 'the sufferings for Christ and the glories that should follow',
and 'the grace that is to be brought at the revelation of Jesus Christ' are wondrously related.

It is because John had to teach this truth, that he tells us that he saw not the dead bodies, but the souls of the martyrs under the altar. Here, these suffering saints 'lost their souls' for Christ's sake. In chapter 20:4 John again saw 'the souls' of these martyrs glorified — they had 'found them', as the Lord had promised. This is a lesson worth the learning, and lies very near the heart of the *Apocalypse*, tracing as the book does the 'overcomer' through suffering to glory. These martyrs were slain on account of the Word of God, and on account of the testimony which they held. Four times do we find the 'testimony' and the 'Word' together in the Revelation, namely:

'Testimony' and 'Word' together, in the Revelation

John's testimony to the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ (1:2).

John in tribulation and patience for the kingdom of Jesus, in the isle of Patmos for the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus (1:9).

John sees under the altar the souls of those slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held (6:9).

John sees on thrones those who were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God (20:4).

It will be seen that to hold this testimony in the days of the Revelation will mean suffering and death. This is further emphasized in Revelation 12:17, 'And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus'; and here the dragon himself is seen to be the great persecutor. God views the death of these witnesses as sacrifices — their souls are seen under the altar, they have 'loved not their lives unto the death'. Their cry ascends to God, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and take vengeance for our blood from them that dwell upon the earth'. The church of God cannot cry to God for vengeance, such is
not in harmony with its calling. When the day of grace
closes, and the day of vengeance sets in, then the cry will
be right and proper, and the ‘Imprecatory Psalms’ and the
many prophecies of vengeance will be fulfilled. Those
upon whom vengeance is called are, ‘them that dwell on
the earth’. Reference is made to these earth dwellers in
very awful and solemn settings. We give the passages in
order that this special title may receive the attention that
seems its due.

The earth dwellers

3:10. Speaks of the hour of temptation about to come on such.
6:10. Vengeance for blood shed is called down on them.
8:13. An angel flies in mid-heaven saying, Woe, woe, woe to
them.
11:10. They rejoice over the death of the two witnesses.
11:10. Who had tormented them.
13:8. They shall worship the beast. Their names not written
in the Lamb’s book of life.
13:12. They are made to worship the beast by the false prophet.
13:14. They are deceived by his numerous signs.
13:14. They are told to make an image to the beast.
14:6. An angel flies in mid-heaven with the aionion gospel to
them.
17:2. They were made drunk with the woman’s wine, which is
likened to the blood of the martyrs (verse 6).
17:8. They shall wonder at the beast. Their names not written
in the book of life.

The only gleam in the gloomy list is 14:6, and then we
have no warrant for believing that the ‘earth dwellers’
obey this primeval gospel, although we believe many of
those who are differentiated from them (see 14:6, ‘and
unto every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people’) will
fear God in the hour of His judgment.

In answer to the cry of the martyred witnesses we read:
And there was given to each one a white robe, and it was said to them that they should rest yet for a time until both their fellow servants and their brethren that were about to be killed as they also had been, fill up the appointed number’ (Rev. 6:11 author’s translation).

The following passages will make clear the reason why these martyred saints were given white robes:

‘Nevertheless, thou hast a few names in Sardis which defiled not their garments, and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments’ (3:4,5 author’s translation).

‘A great multitude ... arrayed with white robes, and palm branches in their hand’ (7:9 author’s translation).

‘These are they who come out of the Great Tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white through the blood of the Lamb’ (7:14 author’s translation).

To each of the unavenged martyrs is given a symbol of the overcomer. ‘They are worthy’, ‘They overcame because of the blood of the Lamb’ (12:11). They are bidden to rest yet for a time. Their fellow-sufferers who were to be killed as they had been were also said to ‘rest from their labours, for their works follow with them’ (14:13). God, Who allows His witnesses to be put to death for their testimony, knows them each one. Knows the number that must suffer, looks upon their faithfulness as an acceptable sacrifice with reward in view. The guilty world little dreams that the blood they shed cries for vengeance. It does, and when iniquity reaches its height again, in a rebuilt Babylon, judgment falls. Blessed are they who in that day hold the testimony of the Lord, blessed are they who are kept out of that hour, blessed are they whose hope shall anticipate the fall of vengeance, blessed are they who in every dispensation ‘hold fast the faithful word’.

‘And I saw when He opened the sixth seal, and there was a great shaking, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, as the fig tree casteth her untimely figs when shaken by a mighty wind, and the heaven was separated (from its place) as a scroll rolling itself up; and every island and mountain were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and
every bondman and free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the mountains. And they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. Because the great day of His wrath is come, and who is able to stand?' (Rev. 6:12-17 author's translation).

THE GREAT SHAKING.— Although the word *seismos* may be rendered 'earthquake' with truth in many passages, the primitive idea ('a shaking') will fit the context better in this case. Seven times do we find the earthquake or *seismos* mentioned in the Revelation itself, and as we desire to provide every facility for arriving at a true conclusion, we will set them out first.

*seismos* in Revelation

The 'shaking' upon the opening of the sixth seal (6:12).
The result of the angel's scattering of fire on the earth, before the seven trumpets were sounded (8:5).
The reviving of the two witnesses is followed by an earthquake, when the tenth of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain 7,000 men (11:13).
The result of the temple being opened in heaven (11:19).
The result of the pouring out of the seventh bowl. This earthquake is the greatest ever known (16:18).

It will be seen that this ‘shaking’ is connected with the presence of the Lord either on the throne, in the temple, or manifesting Himself in the raising up of the two witnesses, and in every case judgment is imminent. There is evident allusion in Revelation 6:12,13 to the times spoken of by Joel 2:10,11:

"The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining ... for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"

A further reference to similar phenomena is found in Joel 2:30,31, which Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost, and declared that the outpouring of the spirit which had then taken place was the fulfilling of Joel 2:28,29. The complete prophecy of Joel has not yet been fulfilled, but a
sevenfold beginning was made, leaving the wonders in heaven and earth to take place in the Day of the Lord.

It will be remembered that the mighty earthquake that ushers in great Babylon’s judgment in Revelation 16 is preceded by the gathering of the whole world to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. The armies are gathered into the place called Armageddon (Har-Magedon R.V.). In Joel 3:9-16 there is a proclamation of ‘Holy War’ (see margin verse 9), and the Gentiles are gathered for judgment. There again we read:

‘The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake’ (Joel 3:15,16).

In the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah we have The burden of Babylon. The reader should read from the commencement of the chapter, noting parallels with Joel 3. In verses 9-11, 13, and 19, we read:

‘Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger ... For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil ... therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of Hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger ... And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah’ (Isa. 13:9-11,13,19).

When considering the cry for vengeance under the fifth seal, we quoted Isaiah 34:8, which links the day of the Lord’s vengeance with the year of the recompense for the controversy of Zion. The same chapter is an Old Testament prophecy of the effect of the opening of the sixth seal:
The indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies ... all the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree ... for it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance ...
Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; He will come and save you' (Isa. 34:2-8; 35:4).

A terrible shaking awaits the nations of the earth. Even in the present day, as we see thrones and crowns on the brink of collapse, what word so expresses the state of the nations and kingdoms as the words of Haggai, 'I will shake all nations'?

'For thus saith the LORD of Hosts; Yet once (first), it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of Hosts' (Hag. 2:6,7).

Here is the blessing of Israel. The closely related 'vengeance' on the nations is found in Haggai 2:21,22, 'I will shake the heavens and the earth: And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations'. In the epistle to the Hebrews we see that the shaking of the earth looks back to Sinai, while the shaking of the heavens 'once for all' looks forward to a far more violent and far-reaching visitation, the inspired comment being, 'Yet once for all denotes the removal of the things that may be shaken, as of things that have been made, so that the things which cannot be shaken may remain' (Heb. 12:25-29).

Coming now, with all these prophecies, to Matthew 24, the key prophecy, we shall be able to locate the sixth seal in the Divine plan:

'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven' (Matt. 24:29,30).

No mention is made in this passage of the shaking of the nations, but this is supplied by Luke:
And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh ... For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled ... until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory' (21:20-27).

It will be observed that in Matthew 24:29 we have a distinct point of time indicated. The tribulation is immediately followed by the shaking and the signs in heaven. Therefore we can with certainty say that the great tribulation takes place either at the breaking of the fifth seal, or before the opening of the sixth. If this be so, then, still following the order of Matthew 24:15, the Abomination of desolation must find its place somewhere between the fourth and sixth seals, and consequently Revelation 13 must be assigned a place here. It appears, therefore, that although there are seven seals upon the scroll, six of them exhaust the period of its prophecy. The sixth seal takes us to a period of time, when kings, great men, and bond and free shall flee to hide from the wrath of the Lamb. The period which is reached by the sixth seal is called, 'The great day of His wrath'. We are led on by a different series of events to the same end when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, for again the period is given, 'Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged' (Rev. 11:18).

The record of the seven angels who have the seven vials gives us fuller details of this period of 'wrath' (6:17; 11:18), for they have the seven golden vials full of the wrath of God. At the opening of the seventh seal, upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and upon the pouring out of the seventh vial, we have voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake or shaking (8:5; 11:19; 16:18). These three series of seals, trumpets and vials are each connected with the temple (8:3-5; 11:19; 16:1,17).
We have devoted time to this particular section because of the need there is to seek an answer to the question, 'Do the seven trumpets, and the remaining prophecies of the Revelation, take place after the sixth seal in order of time, or do they go back and give fuller details of the period covered by the six seals?' The fact that the abomination of desolation and the great tribulation come before the opening of the sixth seal, necessarily brings some of the later chapters into the period covered by chapter 6, and considering also the manner in which each series of seals, trumpets, and vials ends, we cannot help but feel that the teaching is the true one which sees in the six seals the large outline of events, and in the subsequent trumpets and vials the fuller details of the same period.

Just by way of suggestion we pass on the following items (trusting the reader may be stirred up to make his own list and comparisons):

In the rendering of Revelation 6:12-17, which appears on pages 234 and 235, it will be observed that there comes the expression, 'the whole moon became as blood'. If we consider this as meaning what is known as the full moon, we shall miss the important connection with the events of the fourth trumpet. When the fourth angel sounded, the third part of the sun was smitten and the third part of the moon. Just as God in His dealings with Pharaoh held back the threatened judgment upon the firstborn until the very last, so here we can see that the sounding of the fourth trumpet, though mentioned after the opening of the sixth seal, is really before it in point of time.

Again, at the conclusion of this fourth trumpet an eagle flies through mid-heaven with cries of Woe. Under the fourth seal men repent not, neither give God glory. This seems connected with the record of chapter 14:6, which speaks of an angel flying through mid-heaven with the aionion gospel, calling upon the earth dwellers to give glory to God.
May the revelation of these realities stir us up to diligent prayerful service, and steadfast faith during the days in which we are called upon to witness.

The minds of men are beginning to visualize what is likely to be coming on the earth, and however fantastic the following advertisement may appear to us today, there is nevertheless an anticipation of what will happen at the breaking of the sixth seal, when men will hide themselves ‘in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains’ (Rev. 6:15), when the great day of wrath shall have come.

Atomic haven

THIS ADVERTISEMENT appeared in a Washington newspaper:

‘Mountain safety. Are you seeking haven for atomic crisis? Colonies now forming in Ozark Mountain area; ideal refuges; accessible caves’.
CHAPTER 9

The Sealing of the 144,000

Revelation 7:1-8

Before the inspired record deals with the opening of the seventh seal, two episodes are introduced; one, the sealing of the 144,000; the other, the great multitude before the throne.

There is nothing in the wording of the passage to tell us definitely just where to place these visions in relation to the seals. The words with which chapter 7 commences are (according to the best texts and the Revised Version) after this, and not 'after these things'; there is therefore no necessity to take the sealing as occurring after the sixth seal in point of time. In verses 1 and 2 reference is made to four angels who had received commandment to injure the earth, the sea, and the trees by the instrumentality of the four winds of the earth:

'And I saw another angel ascending from the east (sunrising), having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads' (Rev. 7:2,3).

We do not read anything that exactly answers to this hurting of the earth, sea and trees in any of the happenings following upon the opening of the six seals. In the sixth seal there is a most awful convulsion or shaking, but this seems to be the result of something other than the wind. In chapter 9 the fifth angel sounds and locusts come out upon the earth:

'And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads' (Rev. 9:4).

Here, by implication, we see the 144,000, for they are contrasted with the unsealed ones.

Let us now turn to the prophet Ezekiel to see whether we can obtain any light from his prophecy. The first
twelve chapters of Ezekiel are taken up with the desolateness of Jerusalem and Israel, even as the concluding thirteen are taken up with the restoration. Chapter 1 is full of teaching concerning *four living creatures* (the very same name as the four *beasts*, or living ones, of Revelation). Ezekiel receives his commission to go to the rebellious house of Israel, and in chapter 4 he prophesies, by means of a symbol, the siege of Jerusalem; there we find a parallel with the third seal:

'I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment' (Ezek. 4:16).

In chapter 5, Ezekiel is bidden to take a sharp sword, 'as a barber's razor shalt thou take it', and with it used in this fashion he is told to cut-off some of his hair and beard. The hair was divided into three parts, one-third to be burned in the city, one-third to be smitten with the sword, and the remaining third scattered to the wind, and the Lord said, 'I will draw out a sword after them'. A few in number were to be taken and bound in the prophet's skirts. These signs are interpreted in verse 12:

'A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee (see the first four seals of Rev. 6): and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them' (Ezek. 5:12. This emphasis upon the third part is also found in Rev. 8).

No mention is made in this passage of those typified by the small portion of hair bound in the prophet's skirt; in chapters 6 and 7, however, a hint is given by the reference to a 'remnant' that 'escape' (6:8; 7:16). Chapters 8 to 11 are taken up with the sins of Israel with reference to the temple, and a series of 'abominations' are shown to the prophet. In chapter 9:4-6 the Lord commanded:
The Sealing of the 144,000

'Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others He said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My Sanctuary' (Ezek. 9:4-6).

Without pursuing this section further, it will be seen that we have a close parallel to the sealing of the 144,000 in the book of Revelation. We cannot but feel that they, too, will be marked off as ones that sigh and that cry because of the abomination that maketh desolate. The sealing of these saints of God is in direct contrast with the branding of the beast (Rev. 13:16-18; 14:9-11; 16:2; 19:20). God's own are 'sealed', the devil's own are 'marked' or 'branded'. John tells us that he 'heard the number of the sealed', and the 144,000 (12,000 for each tribe) must be taken literally. Again in 9:16, a far more 'figurative' sounding number is given, that is, 'two hundred thousand thousand!' yet the apostle solemnly declares, 'I heard the number of them'. When the number is beyond computation he has said so, e.g., 'whose number is as the sand of the sea' (20:8), or even more to the point, in the very next vision to the 144,000 he sees a multitude 'that no man could number'. Moses Stuart says, 'That the number in this case is symbolical, and not to be literally taken, seems scarcely necessary to remark'; the same writer, however, when speaking of the order of the names of the twelve tribes, makes the observation, 'There are no two cases in the whole Bible where the order and number are the same'. The following table may be useful as a guide to the underlying reasons for this variation of what at first would seem to be a fixed subject (see overleaf).
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We have not attempted to set out all the lists that occur in the Scriptures as the foregoing will be sufficient for our purpose. The first, the order of birth, needs no comment. Where the order differs from this one, however, an explanation seems necessary. The omission of Levi from four of the lists (Nos. 4-7) is explained in Joshua 18:7, ‘The Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance’. These four lists deal with the earthly inheritance. Levi finds a place in No. 8 which deals with the heavenly inheritance. Ephraim is omitted in No. 8, but Joseph is named, while in Nos. 4 to 7, Joseph is omitted. Numbers 13:11 explains the omission of Joseph’s name, ‘Of the tribe of Joseph, namely of the tribe of Manasseh’. This also would stand good in an opposite sense in No. 8, and Joseph would there stand for Ephraim, Manasseh being mentioned by name. The omission of Simeon from the blessing of Moses is explained by The Companion Bible, in a note on Deuteronomy 33:7, saying, ‘Judah includes Simeon by Figure of Synecdoche; for their inheritance and blessing were one’.

Why is Dan omitted from No. 8? The sealing was that of all the tribes of the children of Israel (Rev. 7:4). Dan is by no means excluded from blessing, as may be seen in No. 7, for the very first to be assigned its position is this tribe. Dan was the first tribe to set up idolatry after the entry into the land, but it must not be forgotten that before Dan’s image was made, Aaron and all the tribes had been involved in the matter of the golden calf. Again, while Dan may have been the first to lapse into idolatry, what tribe is there that is clear from that sin?

The promises of the Revelation are addressed to persons, and are related to personal actions; they take no account of either the good or the bad record of the person’s ancestry. It is essentially ‘to HIM that overcometh’. It may seem strange that not one individual of the tribe of Dan should have been found worthy to receive the seal of the living God, but it is possible that in the light of the fulfilment of this passage abundant reason will be found.
If, as some believe, Antichrist is to be of the tribe of Dan, that would possibly have some influence on the tribe as a whole, but this has to be proved, and we prefer to wait. We do not expect to see the fulfilment of this passage, believing that the blessed hope of the calling wherewith we have been called will have been realized before the Day of the Lord sets in; the church of the one Body has no promise that any of its members will be sealed in their foreheads, but the same principle obtains in this dispensation as in that of the Revelation, as the teaching of Philippians 3 bears witness.

There are some commentators of standing and repute who have, notwithstanding the definite statement of the early part of Revelation 7, interpreted the 144,000 of the tribes of the children of Israel as of the church.

It will be remembered that we considered this passage and gave evidence that the statements of the chapter were to be taken literally. We now approach the second part of the chapter, and the questions arise, ‘Is the great multitude the church? Are they Gentiles?’ By far the great majority of writers take it for granted that this company is composed of saved Gentiles. This we question, and ask the reader to reserve his judgment until we have examined the Scriptures together. It is no argument to produce Scripture to show that the Gentiles will be blessed through Israel — that is a blessed fact, but it does not prove anything here. The words of verse 9 are taken to indicate the Gentile character of the great multitude.

‘After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues’ (Rev. 7:9).

The reader will doubtless be aware that the passage should be rendered, ‘out of all nations’. We have met with a similar expression in chapter 5:9,10:

‘Thou didst purchase for God, by Thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and didst make them to our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign over the earth’ (Rev. 5:9,10 author’s translation).
In Chapter 3 we considered the passage, and concluded that this was a redemption of scattered Israel, not out of one nation, nor as at the first from Egypt, but from many nations (Isa. 11:11,12); the fact that those redeemed were to be a kingdom and priests, pointed to Israel also. The great multitude likewise are Israelites gathered out of every nation, they too are invested with priestly dignity, ‘they serve Him day and night IN HIS TEMPLE’. The great multitude were ‘clothed with white robes’. There is an evident intention in the choice of the word ‘robes’. Elsewhere in the Revelation we read of ‘white raiment’ (3:4,5,18; 4:4) and ‘white linen’ (15:6; 19:8,14) which have their own significance, but ‘robes’ appear to be associated with martyrdom and its award. The only other mention of robes outside this chapter is in chapter 6:11. Under the fifth seal we heard the cry of the martyrs, to whom was given a white robe, with the injunction to await the vengeance for their blood until their brethren and fellowservants who should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. When we see the great white-robed multitude, we see the fulfilment of the promise of the fifth seal. The white-robed throng bear palm branches.

Dr. E.W. Bullinger in his Apocalypse, refers back to Leviticus 23:39-43. In that chapter we have the whole of Israel’s history epitomised in the feasts. Commencing with the birth of the nation at the Passover we follow its course through Pentecost, Harvest, Trumpets, Atonement, and lastly the feast of the Tabernacles. This is also connected with the ingathering of the fruit, and it is at this point that the palm branches are mentioned. Israel were to dwell in booths or tabernacles for the seven days of the feast. When the true feast of Tabernacles is celebrated it is written, ‘and He that sitteth on the throne shall TABERNACLE among them’ (Rev. 7:15). The reason for the feast of Tabernacles is given in Leviticus 23:43:

‘That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT’.
The feast of Tabernacles is connected with the ‘year of release’ (Deut. 15:1; 31:10). By comparing Revelation 7, 14, and Leviticus 23 together, we arrive at the following. The 144,000 sealed ones are the ‘firstfruits unto God’. The great multitude constitute the harvest that follows. When we come to study Revelation 14, we shall have further details given us as to the character of the 144,000, and why some tribes are omitted from the number. The church in Philadelphia had the promise, ‘Because thou didst keep the word of My patience, I also will keep thee out of the hour of temptation’. The promise says nothing about keeping out of the ‘great tribulation’ — it speaks of an hour of temptation, and a temptation which comes upon all the world to try those that dwell on the earth. This will include the worship of the image, the reception of his name or number, and will involve these earth-dwellers in unclean ceremonies. From all this the overcomers will be kept, and so we read of their undefiled character (Rev. 14:4).

The firstfruit is followed by a glorious harvest. If the 144,000 are sustained during the temptation, the great multitude are enabled to endure the great tribulation. The great multitude come out of ‘the tribulation, the great one’. This we learn from the question that is put by one of the elders, the answer being, ‘these are they which came out of great tribulation’. This great tribulation is the subject of more than one prophecy. Matthew 24:15-22 links it with Daniel’s abomination of desolation which is distinctly connected with a fearful outbreak against Israel. Daniel 12:1 says:

‘And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book’.

It will be remembered that only those whose names were ‘written in the book’ withstood the pressure which
was brought to bear upon them to make them worship the beast, and receive his mark. Jeremiah 30:7 says:

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."

The white-robed multitude who stand before the throne have come out of the great tribulation, 'such as never was', 'so that none is like it', they come out of that tribulation which oppressed Daniel's 'people' — Israel, which was called 'Jacob's trouble'.

Let us now seek to understand the meaning of the words, 'they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb'. It is a misconception to speak of this passage as a 'standing of works', in contrast with the 'standing in grace' of the present dispensation. The dispensation is certainly different from the present one, but there is no question of a standing in works here. These are 'overcomers', whose salvation has been settled for good by the once offered sacrifice of Christ. The epistle to the Hebrews makes this clear, and we cannot find any Scriptural warrant to convince us that anyone will be saved, under whatever dispensation he may come, by a mingling of works and faith — the blood of Christ is spoken of four times in the Revelation:

'Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by His Own blood, and made us a kingdom and priests to His God and Father' (Rev. 1:5,6 author's translation).

'Thou wast slain, and didst redeem back to God, by Thy blood out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation, and Thou didst make them to our God a kingdom and priests, and they shall reign on the earth' (Rev. 5:9,10 author's translation).

'They washed their robes and made them white by the blood of the Lamb, because of this are they before the throne of God' (Rev. 7:14,15 author's translation).

'And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death' (Rev. 12:11 author's translation).

Let us notice the facts here recorded, and the order of their development. First is the redemption of the priestly nation, stated without any details except the fact of the
redemption and the goal towards which that redemption was directed:

*From sins ... by His blood ... a kingdom and priests.*

Secondly, the added item is now given that this redemption was not only from sins, but from exile and banishment, 'out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation'; further, the sphere of their priestly kingdom is indicated, 'they shall reign on, or over, the earth'. So far nothing has been said concerning the personal faithfulness of those redeemed, these two passages speak of *all Israel*. The book of the Revelation, however, from first to last is chiefly concerned with 'him that overcometh':

*Out of all nations ... by His blood ... a kingdom and priests on earth.*

The two remaining references do not speak of 'all Israel', but of a faithful number of witnessing Israelites who *overcome*. In the third reference therefore the question of redemption from sin is not in view, it is now, 'the things that accompany salvation' (Hebrews), or the 'working out their own salvation with fear and trembling' (Philippians) that is intended:

*They washed their robes ... by the blood ... they are before the throne.*

The fourth reference makes the positive statement:

*They overcame the devil ... because of the blood.*

Again redemption from sin is not in question. Now 'the washing of the robes', a symbolical statement, is parallel with 'overcoming', a literal statement. Daniel refers to the effect of this trying time in chapters 11 and 12, 'and some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end' (11:35), 'many shall be purified, and made white, and tried' (12:10). Zechariah is more specific. 'I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried' (13:9). Malachi
also refers to a similar effect of 'that day', 'He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness' (3:3). Coming to the book of Revelation itself:

'Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me IN WHITE: for they are WORTHY. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in WHITE RAIMENT' (Rev. 3:4,5).

The great multitude therefore are 'overcomers':

'I saw ... the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God ... and white robes were given unto every one of them' (Rev. 6:9-11).

'The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white (bright): for the fine linen is the righteousness (award) of saints' (Rev. 19:7,8).

Here are some who are pronounced 'worthy', some who 'make themselves ready'. There is no mingling of grace and works, for it is purely a question of overcoming, not of salvation, that is in view all the time. Those who overcame, the preserved of the great tribulation, are said, in a figure, to have 'washed their robes by the blood of the Lamb'. It was because of His blood they overcame, and to them is given the victor's reward. God deals with the redeemed nation in companies. The great bulk are destined to rule on the earth, some by reason of faithfulness will be rewarded with a heavenly ministry, some will be numbered among a company called the Bride, which is chiefly connected with the New Jerusalem. What those had endured who had come out of the great tribulation is indicated in verses 16 and 17, hunger and thirst (for the beast will control the supply of food); great heat through exposure and lack of home and covering; tears, for their sorrows were indeed great.

With these closing verses we break through the thick darkness of that day, and see the peace and rest of that which lies beyond for scattered Israel, and for blinded
Gentiles; and nothing short of this can satisfy. Praise God! darkness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

The Seven Trumpets. Temple Judgments (Rev. 8)

The sixth seal leads on to the day of the wrath of the Lamb, when the heavens shall depart as a scroll. This one statement is sufficient to prove that the sealing of the 144,000 does not follow the sixth seal in time. We are evidently taken back in the history covered by the six seals. The breaking of the seventh seal is therefore very markedly severed off from the breaking of the sixth. The seventh seal is the beginning of another series. A sevenfold judgment is revealed which culminates in the accession of Christ to the throne of universal dominion under the seventh trumpet.

The opening of the seventh seal is followed by silence, silence for about half an hour. While we can easily find 'great voices' and 'thunders' on other similar occasions which mark a contrast, the silence of this verse seems to indicate something deeper. Dr. E.W. Bullinger's, *The Apocalypse* (pp. 294, 295) has brought together the following passages which we here quote:

"On earth, the cry of the saints has been incessant. They "cry day and night". In heaven the cry is now about to be answered, and there is a solemn pause — the silence of expectation.

The Hebrew (dumiyah) silence (fem. adj.), which occurs four times, exactly expresses the position:

1. "O my God, I cry in the daytime, but Thou hearest not; And in the night season, there is no silence to me. But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel" (Psa. 22:2,3).

2. "I was dumb with silence" (Psa. 39:2).

3. "Truly my soul is silence toward God: From Him cometh my salvation" (Psa. 62:1).

4. "There shall be silence before Thee, And praise, O God, in Zion: .... O Thou that hearest prayer, Unto Thee shall all flesh come" (Psa. 65:1,2 R.V. marg.).
In all these four passages the word denotes a period of waiting between the offering of the prayer, and the giving of the answer which shall call forth praise. The adverb in Lamentations 3:26 exactly expresses it: "It is good when one doth wait even in silence for the salvation of Jehovah".

The words of Habakkuk 2:20 seem applicable to this scene, 'The LORD is in His holy temple, be silent all the earth before Him'. So also Zechariah 2:13, 'Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for He is raised up out of His holy habitation'. Some action of intense moment seems imminent. All heaven awaits the moment when God shall speak.

The first movement that follows the silence is the giving of seven trumpets to the seven angels which stood before God.

The seven angels (Tous hepta angeiros). Before the throne, we read in chapter 4:5, were the seven spirits. According to chapter 5:6 the seven spirits of God were sent forth into all the earth. Seven angels preside over the seven churches of Asia. The apostle Paul when writing to Timothy said, 'I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels'. This is comparable with Revelation 1:4,5, 'Grace be unto you and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before the throne, and from Jesus Christ'. Here is heaven's supreme court. 'The judgment shall sit', and it is because of the solemnity of that long deferred judgment that heaven ceases as it were to breathe in dreadful sympathy and anticipation.

Before the seven angels sound their trumpets, another angel steps forward and by his action indicates the character of the impending judgments. They are temple judgments.

The sixth seal left us certainly at the throne, and the close of chapter 7 speaks of the throne, but that is not the case in chapter 8. Even the formula is altered. The seven
angels are not said to stand before the throne, but simply before God. Further, it is not true exposition to draw a severe line between ‘throne’ and ‘temple’, for Revelation 16:17 reads, ‘And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple, from the throne’. Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles all agree to this reading, ‘out of the temple from the throne’, which unites throne and temple together. The very passage before us does the same thing:

‘And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne’ (Rev. 8:3).

The throne is in the temple, and cannot be severed from it. Unlike all other kings the Lord unites priesthood and kingship together. The testimony of Zechariah 6:13 is fatal to the conception of a clear-cut distinction between throne and temple in the Revelation:

‘He ... shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne’.

Isaiah’s vision, as recorded in chapter 6:1-6, links the throne with the temple:

‘In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple ... mine eyes have seen the King ... a live coal ... from off the altar’ (Isa. 6:1-6).

Here again the intentional linking of throne and temple, king and priest, will be recognized, especially when we remember Uzziah’s act. He attempted to unite in himself kingship and priesthood, and for his temerity he was smitten with leprosy. In the year that king died, Isaiah had a vision of the true and only Priest-King.

As the Priest-King, the Lord Jesus appeared before us in the opening vision of the Revelation, and as the Priest-King He will rule and reign. When we read of one who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks,
we see a priest. When we read of his golden girdle, and his clothing, we read of the symbolic robes of a priest.

What is true of the opening of this seventh seal is also true of the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Revelation 11:15-19 records the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and when that trumpet sounds:

‘The TEMPLE of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament (covenant): and there were ... thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail’ (Rev. 11:19).

This temple scene is closely connected with the proclamation, ‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for the ages of the ages’ (Rev. 11:15).

We will now consider a little more closely the record of chapter 8. The prayers that ascend, with the incense offered by the angel, are answered by a symbolic action of judgment:

‘And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices (cries), and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake’ (Rev. 8:5).

This answer to the prayers which is here given, covers the period of the seven trumpets. The prayers of those under the altar who cry for vengeance are at last to be heard. The ‘little season’ (Rev. 6:11) has passed, the seventh of these angels shall introduce the time when the dead should be judged, and rewards given to the Lord’s servants and saints. The judgments do not fall in one stroke. Each trumpet sound introduces an added plague. This sevenfold judgment seems to be a fulfilment of Psalm 79:12, ‘And render unto our neighbours sevenfold into their bosom’. The whole psalm is prophetic of the period. The heathen have come into the Lord’s inheritance. The holy temple is defiled, Jerusalem is in heaps. The dead bodies of servants and saints are devoured by the fowls of heaven and the beasts of the earth. Their blood has been shed round about Jerusalem like water. The heathen have taunted Israel with the silence of God. They pray:
'Let Him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of Thy servants which is shed' (Psa. 79:10).

This prayer ascends unto the Lord. It is answered with fire from the altar. **Fire from the Altar** (8:5). *Then these judgments are temple judgments.* Let us look at the fire from the altar as it falls upon the earth at the sounding of these trumpets:

'The first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up' (Rev. 8:7 R.V.).

Here is the effect of the fire from the altar. All human life is dependent upon the vegetable kingdom. It is not possible for man to assimilate for himself the elements which form his food. The lower orders of creation must lay hold of these for him. With an atmosphere around him four-fifths of which is nitrogen, he would die of starvation. So with all the other necessary elements. What a stroke then it will be when a third part of the earth which stores the food, and the trees and grass which render that food available, are burned with fire.

Under the third seal famine is seen, and here is a parallel affliction. The affliction of a *third part* is a feature of these early trumpet judgments. Let us, to save space, tabulate the references:
1st trumpet. Fire. Third part of the earth and the trees.

2nd trumpet. Fire. Third part of the sea.
Third part of the creatures in the sea.
Third part of the ships destroyed.

3rd trumpet. Burning Lamp. Third part of rivers and fountains of waters.
Third part of waters become wormwood.

4th trumpet. Third part of sun, moon and stars darkened.
Third part of the day and night affected.

There is mercy in this judgment, and it is more clearly seen when we turn to the seven vials. There, mercy is withdrawn. The sea, not a third part, becomes as blood, and every living soul dies in the sea. The rivers and fountains of waters become blood, not a third part. The close parallel between the trumpets and vials we shall see later.

Before proceeding we would draw attention to the equally close parallel between these judgments and the plagues sent through Moses upon Egypt.

The first plague in Egypt turned the river into blood and the fish died.
The second filled the land with frogs.
The third afflicted man with lice.
The fourth corrupted the land with swarms of flies.
The fifth afflicted the cattle with a grievous murrain *
The sixth afflicted the Egyptians with boils.
The seventh killed the cattle with hail.
The eighth, by means of locusts, devoured every herb and fruit.
The ninth plunged Egypt into awful darkness.
The tenth smote every firstborn.

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* Murrain = an infectious disease of cattle, carried by parasites.
The trumpet and vial judgments of the Revelation are repetitions or parallels upon a vaster and grander scale, but they are just as literal. We wish to hurt no one’s feelings when we speak of the interpretation of these judgments set forth by such men as Elliott, Wordsworth, and others of the same school, but with Exodus before us we refuse to believe that the first trumpet means the wars of the Goths and the Vandals, or that ‘trees’ mean princes, and ‘grass’ their power and glory. God Himself has said that in the Day of the Lord He will show wonders in the heavens, and signs on the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood. The literal plagues of Egypt prepare us for the literal judgments of the Revelation. We do not rest however upon analogy, we have definite Scripture for our belief. Israel’s future is connected by a parallel with Exodus:

‘According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things’ (Micah 7:15; see also Isa. 11:15,16).

The redemption of Israel from Egypt will be repeated on a grand scale (Jer. 23:7,8). Indeed God makes a covenant that He will do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation (Exod. 34:10). As every prophecy that has been fulfilled has been fulfilled literally, we prefer to take our stand with those who believe that the sea, the trees, the rivers, and the ships of these trumpet judgments are to be understood literally. We have only to call to mind the menace to national existence that the submarine campaign instituted in the second world war (1939-1945) was, to appreciate, somewhat, the dreadful calamity it will be when a third part of the shipping is destroyed.

Our desire is single — we wish to believe God, and to help His people to be free to do the same, and any allusions to the teachings of other servants of God are not made in a carping spirit, but in an earnest desire for truth free of tradition.
The First and Second Woes (Rev. 9:1-21)

To set out in diagram form that the seventh seal subdivides into seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet again subdivides into seven vials, is attractive, and we have made several attempts to improve upon the efforts of those who had previously dealt with it. Being desirous of making our layout as Scriptural as possible, we made careful examination of the Scriptures to obtain data upon which to work. The result is that no diagram has been prepared, for we have been obliged to confess that our notion on the subject was not supported sufficiently by the Scriptures.

We have seen that the six seals are complete in themselves. No event except solemn silence is chronicled upon the opening of the seventh seal. Instead of the seventh seal expanding to cover the events of the seven trumpets and seven vials, a new set of prophetic visions, ranging over parts of history already covered by the six seals, is introduced by the seven trumpet judgments. Just as the sixth seal completes the series, leaving the seventh detached and isolated, so the sixth trumpet appears to complete the series.

The narrative proceeds unbroken till the sixth trumpet is sounded (Rev. 9:13-21). Chapter 10 does not immediately follow with the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Another mighty angel comes down from heaven, holding in his hand a little book. Seven thunders utter their voices and their utterances are sealed. The mighty angel refers to the days of the sounding of the seventh trumpet as a period when the mystery of God shall be finished. John, however, is told that he must prophesy again before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings. The temple of God is measured, and the two witnesses prophesy for 1,260 days. There is therefore a considerable interval indicated. These trumpets are, however, connected by the fact that they are called the three woes (8:13; 9:12; 11:14). Chapter 12 must go back again in history, for the seventh trumpet proclaims Christ as heaven’s King, while in chapter 12 Satan is
active and the Lord’s people are persecuted. Chapter 13
tells of the rise of the beast and the false prophet, and
chapter 14 speaks of the 144,000 on mount Zion, and of
the fall of Babylon. Then after this long interval the
apostle speaks of the seven vials as the seven last plagues.
It will be seen, however, that under the seventh vial
great Babylon comes into remembrance (16:19), whose
judgment is given in detail in chapters 17 and 18. This
shows that once again, under the vials, history is repeated.
Then follows the great Hallelujah of 19, the marriage
supper of the Lamb, and the riding forth of Christ as King
of kings.

It will be seen that a great interval separates the
trumpets from the vials, and there is no possibility, so it
appears to us, that the seventh trumpet which proclaims
that the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms
of the Lord and of His Christ, can develop into the seven
vials which culminate in the judgment of Babylon. The
order of these seals and trumpets may be perceived more
clearly if set out thus:

Seals and Trumpets

A The Six Seals. A series of judgments ending in wrath of the
Lamb. Heaven departs as a scroll.
B Episode separating the seventh seal from the rest.
The 144,000 and the great multitude.
C The Seventh Seal. Silence in heaven.

A The Six Trumpets. A series of judgments characterized by the
affliction of ‘a third part’.
B Episodes separating the seventh trumpet from the rest.
The little book. The two witnesses.
C The Seventh Trumpet. Christ proclaimed King.

So far there is a sequence of events which corresponds,
but with chapter 12 we commence something quite
different. There is, however, a very marked connection
between the seven trumpets and the seven vials, which we
must notice before we attempt to go further.
The Sealing of the 144,000

Trumpets

(Partial, not complete, mercy still holding back).

FIRST.

On the earth fire and blood. Third part trees and all grass burnt up.

SECOND.

On the sea. Third part became blood. Third part creatures died. Third part ships destroyed.

THIRD.

On the rivers and fountains. Third part smitten. Third part wormwood.

FOURTH.

On sun, moon and stars. Third part smitten. Third part of day and night.

FIFTH.


SIXTH.

The river Euphrates. The four angels loosed. Horsemen. Third part of men killed.

SEVENTH.

Voices saying. Kingship of Christ.

Vials

(The last plagues. In these the fury of God completed).

FIRST.

On the earth grievous sore on worshippers of the beast.

SECOND.

On the sea. It (the sea) became as blood of a dead man. Every living creature died.

THIRD.

On rivers and fountains. All smitten. They become blood.

FOURTH.

On the sun. Men scorched.

FIFTH.

The throne of the beast. Darkness. Men gnawed their tongues for pain.

SIXTH.

The river Euphrates cried up. Way for kings of East prepared. Three spirits like frogs. Armageddon.

SEVENTH.

Into the air. Voice says, 'It is done'.

By comparing the foregoing columns the reader will see that God in His long-suffering reserved the full outpouring of wrath till the end. A third part is smitten under the trumpets, yet men repented not, so the long-deferred stroke at last must fall. By reason of the terrible results that
follow the sounding of the last three trumpets, they are called ‘three woes’.

‘And I beheld, and I heard one eagle flying in mid-heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to those that dwell upon the earth by reason of the sounding of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound’ (Rev. 8:13 author’s translation).

The reading ‘eagle’ (aetos) is supported by the best texts (see Revised Version). Eagles are often used in Scripture in association with judgment, and this may be the reason for its use here. Our interest is therefore focused upon these three trumpets, and we shall observe that they are described at greater length than the first four.

The first four trumpets are somewhat preparatory, warnings as it were to men concerning the nature of their guilt and the judgment impending. Up till this point the seals and the trumpets have shown wonders in earth, sea, air, heaven, and the greater and lesser luminaries.

The first woe opens the Abyss. What this fact means, the mind cannot conceive. The Revelation contains several such crises. The casting of Satan out of heaven to the earth is another such close contact with hell. So also when the beast arises out of the Abyss. What an awful place the world will then become. The nature of the judgment is suggested by the likeness used — locusts. The host of destroyers is headed by Apollyon, the destroyer.

It would appear also from a close following of the original, that a fallen star, not one of the angels of God, is commissioned to let loose this scourge upon the earth. ‘And I saw a star, out of heaven having fallen’. The idea is not so much that John saw the star fall, but that he saw a fallen star. To this fallen star is given the key of the pit of the abyss. The Septuagint uses this word abussos (‘the deep’) in Genesis 1:2. The waters which at that time covered the earth were pushed back at the emerging of the earth, again to break their bounds at the flood, when ‘the fountains of the great deep were broken up’ (Gen. 7:11).
The loosing of these locusts is a forerunner of a greater scourge, for out of the Abyss arises the beast (Rev. 11:7, 17:8). It will be the prison of Satan during the thousand years. It is not to be confused with gehenna or the lake of fire, and it is differentiated in 17:8 from perdition. Satan likewise emerges from the Abyss after the thousand years and is cast into the lake of fire. The Abyss, being so closely connected with the supernatural evils of the closing days of Gentile dominion, will not, we might well expect, liberate blessing to the earth, when the pit is opened by the fallen star. Smoke and intense darkness prepare the way for the scourge now let loose, which is described as that of locusts.

When the prophet Joel would speak of the terrors of the great and dreadful Day of the Lord, he uses the figure of the locust. It is probable that Joel 1:4 refers to the locust under four stages of its development. The children's children were to tell the children of another generation of this destructive scourge. 'Alas', says the prophet, 'for the day! for the Day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come' (Joel 1:15). The second chapter under the blowing of a trumpet speaks of this terrible visitation in language that applies to man. 'A great people and a strong'. Yet they are not ordinary men for, 'there hath not been ever the like, neither shall there be any more after it, even to the years of many generations' (Joel 2:2).

The Assyrian invasions were foreshadowings of the Day of the Lord. That is why Isaiah, in the midst of his prophecy concerning the future, breaks off to tell of Sennacherib and his overthrow. In Proverbs 30:27 we are told that 'the locusts have no king'. As the locusts of Revelation 9 have a king, it follows that these are a different kind from the natural order.

The description of these strange beings is fairly full, if at the same time strange:
(1) They are like horses prepared unto battle.
(2) They wore as it were golden crowns.
(3) Their faces were like the faces of men.
(4) They had hair as the hair of women.
(5) Their teeth were like the teeth of a lion.
(6) They had breastplates of iron.
(7) They made a sound like many chariots.
(8) They had tails like scorpions.
(9) And they had a king named Apollyon.

There is a resemblance between the natural and the supernatural order of locusts in that five months is the space over which their ravages extend. The natural order appear usually in May and cease in September. Ordinary locusts destroy vegetation. These locusts are forbidden to hurt the grass, green herb or tree, but only the men who have not the seal of God upon their foreheads. When the trees are smitten, or the waters become blood, the innocent suffer together with the guilty. This first woe discriminates, and does not punish man by destroying his food, but signally attacks those only who are devoted to the beast. The power of death was not given to them, but the power to torment men for five months. The limitation imposed upon Satan in connection with Job will come into mind. The torment is indeed terrible, for men will seek death and not find it. The reference to the hair on the locust, together with the general setting of the vision, makes one think of Jeremiah 51:27:

‘Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her; call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars’ (or locust bristling with hair).

In Revelation 9:3 we read of the locusts that ‘authority was given to them as the scorpions of the earth have authority’. There is nothing strange in reading that these locusts from the Abyss have an authority given them to hurt, and it might have been written that their hurt was like that of a scorpion. It does say this, but it says more. It reveals the fact that the scorpion of the earth can actually
hurt a man now only because authority is given it. The permission to hurt and destroy is not limited to scorpions, but over the face of the whole nation creatures seem authorized to spoil, destroy, infect and corrupt the fair things of earth. All this is because of sin and the lost dominion of man. It is but intensified in the case before us, and will only cease when the dominion is again vested in the Son of man when it shall at last be true that:

'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid — the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' (or adder's see margin) den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain' (Isa. 11:6-9).

Both the names of the king of these locusts of the Abyss mean destroyer, and Joel, who uses the locust to describe the terrible Day of the Lord, speaks of it as, 'a destruction from the Almighty'. A day comes, however, when God will 'destroy them that destroy the earth', when the last enemy shall be destroyed, when that abused term 'reconstruction' shall be gloriously realized, because it is based upon the 'reconciliation' accomplished by the Son of God.

We now give consideration to the second of these woes.

'One woe is past; behold, there are coming yet two woes after these things' (Rev. 9:12 author's translation).

In the first woe we see the Abyss opened and its immediate consequences. In this there is revealed the yet further relation between rivers and deeps with spirit powers. But first let us notice who it is that speaks and from whence the message comes:

'And the sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God' (Rev. 9:13 author's translation).

The golden altar stood, whether in tabernacle or temple, immediately before the veil. The command proceeds from the temple, and the judgment cannot therefore be called 'political' in a sense which would sever it from connection
with the temple. The command is a singular one: 'Loose the four angels which are bound at the river Euphrates'.

The river Euphrates meets us in Genesis 2 in association with the creation of man. It formed the eastern boundary of the promised land (Deut. 11:24). Babylon's doom was typified by the casting of a book bound to a stone into this river (Jer. 51:63). It is specially marked out for judgment under the sixth vial (Rev. 16:12). Babel and Babylon are linked with this river, and there at this eastern boundary of the land of promise four angels are bound:

'And the four angels were loosed, even those having been made ready for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men' (Rev. 9:15 author's translation).

What stress this passage lays on the exact moment! In our puny computations of prophetic times we are full of suppositions. A published list of the dates and times suggested when certain prophecies are supposed to have been, or will be, fulfilled, would be its own confutation. There are no round figures with God. To us, as to Habakkuk, He speaks:

'The vision is yet for the appointed time, and panteth toward the end, and shall not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay' (Hab. 2:3 author's translation).

Not only the year, but the month of that year is foreordained. Not only the month, but the day, yea, the very hour of that day is a matter of Divine provision. And what is all this careful provision for? — the killing of the third part of mankind! Upon the release of these four angels, there appears an army whose immense numbers, and whose monstrous character, while admittedly beyond our present comprehension, is not beyond our simple faith. The number is 'two myriads of myriads', or 200,000,000, and such an army passes beyond human understanding. Yet the number must not be explained away, for John adds, 'I heard the number'.

The description of these horses is unlike that of any creature known to man. Fire, smoke and brimstone come
out of the horses' mouths and kill the third part of men. The tails also of these horses have heads like serpents. Like the locusts of the preceding trumpet they belong not to our creation — they are from beneath. The description of these creatures is indeed strange, yet we are not therefore to conclude that the passage is figurative. The apostle has described these beings in full detail because they are so strange. God had said:

'I will do marvels (pala, miracles, wondrous works, used of the plagues of Egypt, Psa. 106:22), which have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation' (Exod. 34:10 author's translation).

What seems a greater marvel is revealed in the concluding verses of Revelation 9:

'And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils (demons), and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts' (Rev. 9:20,21).

To think that this great woe should visit mankind, leaving behind one-third of the race dead, and not bring about repentance, seems almost impossible. 'The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?'

Some commentators find a difficulty in interpreting these words literally, believing it to be impossible that the enlightened world should ever fall into idolatry of such gross a type. If the reader will reflect, he will soon discover incipient idolatry with actual, literal idols of gold, silver, brass, wood and stone about him. How many have their 'mascots' in one form or another? From time to time grotesque figures are put on the market in the form of desk companions, motor car mascots, watch chain ornaments, etc., which are 'lucky', or preserve from accident, or some other good that should be sought from the Lord only.

Then the passage specifies the worship of demons. As we write these words (July, 1920) two papers have come into the market. One is called Pan after the Greek god of
that name. The other is called **Eve** which among other advertised attractions will be **Pagan**! One of these publications is for ‘Saints and Cynics’! Spiritism is demonism. The apostle Paul writing to Timothy says:

‘Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (demons)’ (1 Tim. 4:1).

Witchcraft, necromancy, clairvoyance are all leading on to the same dreadful goal — a state of hardened unrepentance, deceiving and being deceived. Of those who are spoken of in Revelation 9, 2 Thessalonians 2 seems to speak:

‘Then shall that Wicked (wicked one) be revealed ... whose coming is after the working of Satan ... with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion (a working of error, R.V.), that they should believe a lie (THE LIE)’ (2 Thess. 2:8-11).

Men will actually worship the dragon, the beast and his image (**see** Rev. 13:4,15). Men will be saved in that depraved hour who simply worship God as the Creator that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters (14:7). Idolatry originated in the heart of man:

‘When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God ... they ... changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, ... changed the truth of God into a **LIE**, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, Who is blessed for ever’ (Rom. 1:21-25).

Immorality is always the handmaid of idolatry. The spirits that prey upon mankind are often ‘unclean spirits’. If mankind sank so low when God ‘gave them up’, to what depth will they descend when God sends them the strong delusion? These sins are essentially ‘religious’. This unprecedented judgment falls upon false worshippers. It is impossible to differentiate between the political and the religious, the throne judgment and the temple judgment, for the references to the temple and worship are not confined to any section. Social sins are spoken of as
secondary in this awful list; and even of the four sins mentioned, sorcery and fornication have much to do with 'religion' (2:20). The ready acceptance of the teaching of demons and the miracles that accompany their teaching are indicated in chapter 16:13,14.

The awful condition indicated in Revelation 9:20,21 is traceable to Babylon, and we need not go outside the Revelation to find that this is so. Babylon makes the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication. Babylon is depicted as drunk with the blood of saints. Babylon deceived all the nations by her sorceries. Babylon becomes the habitation of demons. Since the days of Nimrod, Babylon has been Antichrist. Modernism, the superman, civilisation, are all so many phases of Babylonianism, and we do well to remember the horrible thing that surrounds us and entangles us, lest we forget our separate calling and bring Christ's holy name into disrepute.

We shall miss the most powerful exposition of all if we do not realize that in Revelation 9:20 we have a quotation from the Book of Daniel. It is common knowledge that Daniel's prophetic visions are preparatory to the vision of the Revelation, yet the quotation here is not from one of the visions of Daniel's book. It is taken from Daniel's solemn warning to Belshazzar, in the night in which Belshazzar was slain:

'And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; and the God in Whose hand thy breath is, and Whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: then was the part of the hand sent from Him; and this writing was written ... God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it ... Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting' (Dan. 5:22-27).

Belshazzar lifted himself up against the Lord of heaven in spite of the example of Nebuchadnezzar. He did not
receive the love of the truth that he might be saved. So likewise, in spite of the most unprecedented judgment that had fallen upon mankind, it is written, *the rest of the men ... repented not* (Rev. 9:20).

If Belshazzar sets forth the character and doom of the last phase of Babylonianism, Daniel and his companions set forth the faithful remnant, who pass through fire and who are cast to the lions, rather than bow down to the idol of the state. We may have sung with little thought, as children, ‘Dare to be a Daniel’. May we pray with a deeper realization that both we and our dear ones may stand as steadfast as did that man of God.

So ends this phase of the sixth trumpet judgment, with a world mad upon its idols, and given up to evil. As it was with Belshazzar, so must it be again; the next act in this mighty drama will be the ‘taking of the Kingdom’, not indeed by Darius the Mede (who will follow the folly of Belshazzar), but by Christ the Lord, the Prince of the kings of the earth.
CHAPTER 10

The Mystery of God Finished

Revelation 10

The result of the sounding of the sixth trumpet revealed mankind with a heart like that of Belshazzar. The quotation from Daniel 5 makes one feel that judgment, severe and without remedy, is imminent. The kingdoms of this world are about to pass under the blessed sway of Christ the Lord. Before the seventh angel sounds and the proclamation of heaven's King is made, two most solemn episodes intervene. The first is recorded in chapter 10.

A mighty angel with insignia of covenant-keeping power descends from heaven. In chapter 4 a rainbow encircled the throne. Here the rainbow is seen on the head of the mighty angel. His face also was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. There is a close parallel here with the description of the Lord as the King-Priest in Revelation 1. This mighty angel comes, clothed with the authority of heaven, and comes to announce with mighty voice that the Lord at length will take unto Himself His great power and reign. "The nations tumultuously assemble, and the peoples imagine a vain thing. The kings of the earth set themselves, the rulers take counsel together (a league evidently in operation) against the Lord and against His Anointed". These words of Psalm 2 seem prophetic of this period. "Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure". These words speak of the judgment of the Revelation. "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion". This is the substance of the result of sounding the seventh trumpet. In spite of all, in spite of Satan, the beast, and all the infernal hosts, "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth".

The power indicated in Psalm 2.— "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel" — is referred to in the Revelation more than once. The decree announced in this Psalm has reference to the Son as the King. In Psalm 110 we find the
words, ‘The LORD said unto My Lord, "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool"’. This is what has been happening under the seals and the trumpets. At the sixth trumpet the enemies of the Lord are seen as His footstool. ‘The Lord shall send the rod of Thy strength out of Zion: rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies’. This is not the reign of peace, it is the rule of the greater David, before the Solomonic reign can begin.

Instead of the decree we have here an oath, ‘The LORD hath sworn and will not repent, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek"’. Heaven’s King is also Priest. Throne and Temple are united in Him. His nearest subjects are a kingdom of priests, and these two functions cannot be divided in the Revelation.

‘The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the heathen (nations), He shall fill the places with the dead bodies; He shall wound (strike through) the heads over many countries (a great land)” (Psa. 110:5.6).

These words vividly anticipate the remaining chapters of the Revelation.

The mighty angel who descends from heaven in Revelation 10 holds in His hand ‘A little scroll open’. There are three contrasts here with the scene of chapter 5. There, it is a scroll; here, it is a little scroll. There, none but the Lamb of God could be found worthy enough to take the scroll; here, a mighty angel has it. There, it was sealed with seven seals; here, it is open. It seems evident that this mighty angel comes with full authority and with all the evidences to make formal claim for his Lord. When Christ, as the Son of man, was about to come in lowliness to Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Calvary, a man of the wilderness in camel’s hair was His forerunner. Now that the same Son of man is about to take the kingdom and reign in glory, His forerunner is a mighty angel. John the Baptist cried ‘Repent’, but the sixth trumpet reveals the utter impenitence of man. The mighty angel makes no call to repentance.
Majesty accompanies this great forerunner’s every act. ‘He set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth’. This first act symbolizes possession. At His first coming though ‘the world was made by Him, the world knew Him not’. He was pointed out by His forerunner as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. At His Second Coming the world made by Him will be claimed by Him. Creation will not be alienated for ever. His forerunner this time enters into possession. The inheritance is secured:

‘Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen, thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth, thy possession’ (Psa. 2:8).

No longer as the Lamb of God to die for sin, but as the Lion of the tribe of Judah He is coming in power and great glory. The cry of this mighty angel was as the roar of a lion, and seven thunders utter their voices at his cry, ‘the seven thunders’ to be exact. We have the seven angels, the seven stars, the seven spirits, and here the seven thunders. What were these echoes awakened by the angel’s voice? Were they the distant sound of the seven vials? We do not know. For some wise purpose the apostle was commanded, ‘Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not’. Whatever they said, it was sealed. We believe that they are unsealed in the pouring out of the seven last plagues. The angel now:

‘lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer’ (Rev. 10:5,6).

Before saying anything about this, we shall be wise to notice a parallel passage in Daniel 12. The prominent figure is Michael, the great prince which standeth for Israel. The setting is the time of great tribulation and resurrection. Daniel is instructed to shut up the words, and to seal the book, even to the time of the end. Then comes the parallel with Revelation 10:
And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by Him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished (Dan. 12:7).

In both cases, it will be observed, time is the subject. The term 'time, times, and a half', is one way of referring to that period which figures so largely in Revelation, and is spoken of sometimes as 1,260 days, sometimes as forty-two months, being three years and a half. This we will consider in its proper place. In Revelation 10, instead of saying that a certain amount of time shall run its course, the angel says, 'time shall be no longer'.

The word 'time' here is chronos. This word is used four times in the Revelation, and its meaning will be ascertained by considering the four passages together:

**Chronos**


B. 6:11. 'A little season'.—Souls slain for Word of God and testimony; told to wait.

A. 10:6. 'No longer time'.—See statement concerning non-repentance at the end of chapter 9, and the judgment that follows.

B. 20:3. 'A little season'.—Souls of beheaded for testimony and Word; now reign.

It will be seen that the passage in 10:6 corresponds with 2:21, and leads us to see that the angel declares that 'space for repentance shall be no longer'. Awful announcement! Yet who can say the Lord has not been long-suffering! The very complicated series of slowly increasing judgments are evidences that judgment is His strange act (Isa. 28:21). Now however the wrath is come to the uppermost, and will be poured out without admixture. Coupled with this, we must read 6:11. There, delay is indicated until the martyr host is complete; here, the delay
is finished, heaven’s King is at hand, and the martyred souls are soon to be liberated to share the reign of the thousand years. A sharp contrast therefore is made in the messages of the two forerunners.

We said above that the mighty angel makes no call to repentance; we can now see that he indicates that the time for repentance is over. This is indeed a ‘Woe’. The angel’s statement however has not been completely given yet. After this declaration that there should be time no longer he continues:

‘But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished also, as He hath announced the glad tidings to His servants the prophets’ (Rev. 10:7 author’s translation).

The mystery of God announced as a gospel (evangelizo) to His servants the prophets must not be confused with the Mystery revealed only to the apostle Paul. It is the conclusion of the gospel of the kingdom, deferred owing to Israel’s unrepentance, and here strangely enough ushered in upon the impenitence of the Gentiles. However, there may be a connection here of these two hitherto separate lines of truth. The hope of the church of the Mystery is given in Colossians 3:4:

“When Christ, who is our life, shall appear (be made manifest), then shall ye also appear (be made manifest) with Him in glory’.

Before the Lord takes to Himself His great power to reign, He will be ‘made manifest’ in glory. The church of the One Body will then be ‘made manifest’ with Him. The time when this takes place we are not told. Here, as we see in chapter 10, the mystery of God is brought to a conclusion in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound. All the mysteries of the Word seem to focus here. What are the mysteries referred to in Matthew 13? Most interpreters of the parables would have us believe that the Christendom of the past 1,900 years is the fulfilment of those parables. We believe they point to the closing Day of the Lord.
The mystery of Christ’s rejection is solved at the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The mystery of Israel’s blindness shall be finished when the trumpet sounds, for when ‘He shall send back Jesus’, the times of restoration shall begin, and all Israel shall be saved. Israel’s feast of trumpets in the seventh month, the trumpet of the Jubilee with its liberty and re-entry into the forfeited inheritance, is consummated in the sounding of this seventh trumpet. The mystery of the sudden change from mortality to immortality without the necessity of death and resurrection will be solved when this trumpet sounds. This, together with the resurrection, takes place at the last trump. When this is brought to pass the prophecy of Isaiah 25:8 is fulfilled, which in its turn will take place when the veil that is spread over all nations shall be taken away, the rebuke of God’s people be taken away from off all the earth, and the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously (Isa. 25:6-8; 24:23).

The proclamation of Christ as King is the solution of the mystery of God, its delay the reason for the chequered history of the world, its attainment one great step toward the goal of the purpose of the ages.

John is commanded to take the little scroll and eat it. The effect of doing so was that while it was to his mouth as sweet as honey, yet to his belly it was bitter. Ezekiel 2:9 to 3:3 is parallel. ‘How sweet are thy words to my taste, yea sweeter than honey to my mouth’, said the psalmist, and this is echoed by the apostle. Yet the awful character of the judgments therein revealed could not be contemplated without emotion.

After having taken the little scroll and eaten it, John is told, ‘Thou must prophesy again concerning (or against, but not “before”, epi with dative) many peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings’. The simplest interpretation seems to be that the remaining chapters of the Revelation, ‘the words of this prophecy’, are here intended. Some who think that a future ministry is here
indicated have wondered whether John was to be one of the two witnesses of chapter 11, but this we do not believe is at all likely.

There is a sweetness and a bitterness at the consummation of God's mystery. It is the year of God's redeemed, but it is also the day of vengeance. This we shall see more fully when we read the actual passage in chapter 11, which chronicles the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The book of the Revelation is essentially, 'The revelation of Jesus Christ'. The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. 'Lo, I come', and 'Lo, He comes' fill the volume of the book and bring the mystery of God to an end.

The second woe finishes with the testimony of the two witnesses, who are introduced by the measuring of the temple, the altar and the worshippers. This section, therefore, like that of the opening one of the second woe, has to do with worship, and is a temple section.

'And there was given to me a reed, like a rod, and he said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and take account of those who worship therein. But the court that is without the temple cast without, and measure it not: because it is given up to the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months' (Rev. 11:1,2 author's translation).

We are inclined to translate 'a reed, like a sceptre'. Moses Stuart and Dr. E.W. Bullinger show that the Hebrew equivalent is used for a measuring rod (Psa. 74:2; Jer. 10:16; 51:19). These references, however, are not very convincing. The word *rhabdos* is used in the New Testament with the meaning of:

An ordinary staff (Matt. 10:10).
A rod for correction (1 Cor. 4:21).
A sceptre as of a King (Heb. 1:8).
A rod as of the High Priest (Heb. 9:4).
The shepherd's club (Rev. 2:27, *rule* — 'to shepherd'. The word occurs four times in the Revelation, 2:27; 11:1; 12:5; 19:15).
It will be seen therefore that three references speak of shepherding the nations, and one is connected with measuring the temple.

Two passages of the Old Testament may throw a light on the meaning intended here:

‘And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD’ (Lev. 27:32).

‘I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant’ (Ezek. 20:37).

In these passages the Lord is either claiming a portion as His special tithe, or referring to the gathering again of Israel. In both cases there is an emphasis upon peculiar possession, protection and reservation.

It will be remembered that before the seventh seal was opened 144,000 of the tribes of Israel were sealed. Here, before the seventh trumpet sounds, the temple and its worshippers are measured. Taking the suggestion of peculiar ownership from Leviticus 27 and Ezekiel 20, and that of sealing and preservation from Revelation 7, it appears that such is the meaning of the measuring of the temple. Another parallel is found in Zechariah 2.

‘I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof ... Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein: For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her’ (Zech. 2:1-5).

What is intended of the city here, seems to be intended of the temple in Revelation 11. The passage in Revelation is concerned only with preserving the innermost part of the temple, the court is cast out and the city is trodden under foot. This emphasizes the fact that the temple and its worship is to be specially remembered in this section.

There are several passages of Old Testament Scripture which refer to the time of trouble that will overtake the
Lord's people, and indicate their place of refuge. Take for example the following:

'He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty' (Psa. 91:1).

'... to enquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock' (Psa. 27:4,5).

'Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues' (Psa. 31:20).

This secret place, the secret of His tabernacle and presence, seems intended in Revelation 11. The pride of man reaches its height in the blasphemy of the beast. This period is given as 42 months in 13:5, which is exactly the same period given for the treading down of the city in Revelation 11:2. All except the inner shrine of the temple (naos) is given over to the Gentiles. But God has reserved His portion. There is a secret place. The sealed 144,000 will find a secure haven from the pride of men and the strife of tongues. The Lord (in Luke 21:24) says:

'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled'.

We will not go into the question as to when these times commenced; it will be sufficient for us here to state broadly that they commenced with Nebuchadnezzar as the king of Babylon. Revelation 11 does not speak of the whole Gentile times, but only of the final period of forty-two months when blasphemy will reach its height. During this period two specially equipped witnesses will prophesy:

'And I will endow My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth' (Rev. 11:3 author's translation).

This period, given in days, is the same as the forty-two months already mentioned. While the final treading down of the city takes place, the two witnesses prophesy. As a result of Elijah's prayer the heaven was shut for the same period, three and a half years, so that there was no rain
(Luke 4:25; James 5:17). The history of that event and the character of the king should be remembered as a type of the end. Many expositors believe that Elijah will be one of the two witnesses, and those who argue that as he did not die he must come back to do so usually take Enoch to be the other witness. Others, by reason of the transfiguration, prefer Moses and Elijah. The better plan is to abide by the statement of Scripture. ‘These are the two olive trees, and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth’.

The title ‘Lord of the earth’ is in line with the angel’s claim in chapter 10 over the sea and the earth, upon which he placed his feet. The alternative to worshipping the beast is that of worshipping the Creator (14:7) for the condition of things has become so bad that this most elementary feature constitutes the whole of the gospel then proclaimed. The Gentile times revert back to the character given in Romans 1:18-32. The two witnesses are spoken of as the two olive trees and the two lampstands. This is a reference back to Zechariah 4. When the angel asked Zechariah whether he knew the meaning of the two olive trees which emptied their oil into the lampstand, he replied, ‘No, my Lord’. Then he answered Zechariah, saying:

‘This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the LORD of Hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, saying, Grace, grace unto it’ (Zech. 4:6,7).

The olive branches are differentiated from the lampstand, and are ‘the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth’ (verse 14). In the Revelation the witnesses are called the two olive trees and the two lampstands. However, much is parallel. In both cases there is a return from captivity in progress. Great opposition is rising against the people, the city and the temple. Nevertheless, the seventh angel shall sound and the headstone shall be brought forth with acclamation. The
great mountain foreshadows Babylon, and when Babylon falls, heaven rings with Hallelujahs and the Lord rides forth on the white horse as King of kings and Lord of lords.

The secret of power for the two witnesses is, 'by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts'. These witnesses have the power of devouring their enemies with fire and of shutting up the rain of heaven. They can turn water into blood, and smite the earth with every plague as often as they will. The plagues brought upon Pharaoh by Moses and the judgments brought about by Elijah were literal; so will these be, no power, not even that of Satan himself, can cut short a testimony given and sustained by God. For three and a half years, Satan, the beast, and the false prophet with their host of followers, both demon and human, try in vain to stop this testimony. All the while that men are enrolling themselves on the side of the beast, God sustains a powerful miraculous testimony to Himself and His truth. The whole world have this testimony and become thereby involved in responsibility and guilt.

It is important to observe the order of the words in Revelation 19:20, 'with which he deceived those that had received the mark of the beast'. The receiving came before the deceiving. They are without excuse. Heaven's witnesses have given unceasing warning, and at last repentance becomes impossible.

'And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast, which cometh up out of the abyss, shall make war upon them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie on the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord also was crucified' (Rev. 11:7,8 author's translation).

The two witnesses die at Jerusalem. Its character at the time is vividly presented under the two similes Sodom and Egypt, and by the connection of the martyrdom of the two witnesses with the crucifixion of their Lord. So far as God's purpose is concerned Jerusalem is 'the holy city', but viewed in its apostasy it is not even named, being
described instead by a threefold description which reveals its complicity with the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

By reading chapter 13 it will be seen that while these two witnesses are working their miracles, the false prophet is working his. It is a repetition of the days of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh. A short-lived rejoicing (Rev. 11:10) is followed by a great fear, for these servants of the Lord are raised from the dead and a loud voice from heaven says:

‘Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. At that same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth part of the city fell, and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand names of men’ (Rev. 11:12,13 author’s translation).

The result of this judgment causes great fear to fall upon men, and they give glory to the God of heaven. No evidence is given that these men experience any change of nature, and the giving of the glory may be a passing admission that ‘this is the finger of God’. On the other hand we do not limit God. The aionion gospel distinctly says, ‘Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come’ (14:7), and therefore we leave it without expressing an opinion. With this incident the second woe passes, and the third woe is spoken of as coming quickly.

God has never left Himself without witness. In the utter corruption and apostasy of the final three and a half years of this world’s Christless history, two miraculously endowed, and miraculously sustained, witnesses bear their testimony. The long-suffering exhibited toward Pharaoh is repeated toward his antitype, and the miraculous ministry of Moses and Aaron is repeated in that of the two witnesses. But, alas, as it was with Pharaoh, so will it be again: the waters will cover the oppressor, and all his pomp will descend to perdition.
The next sound to break forth is that of the seventh trumpet. Surely in those days the urgent prayer will be, *Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.*

The first *woe* was occasioned by the opening of the abyss (9:1-11), the second by the loosing of the four angels bound at the river Euphrates (9:12-21).

The first woe synchronizes with the fifth trumpet (9:1), the second with the sixth trumpet (9:13). We now approach the third woe and the seventh trumpet:

‘The second *woe* is past; and, behold, the *third woe* cometh quickly. And the *seventh* angel sounded’ (Rev. 11:14,15).

So far the parallelism is preserved, but when we read on, we become conscious of a change in the order of narration. Instead of some more dreadful judgments falling, heaven rings with the joyful news that at long last:

‘The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever (the ages of the ages)’ (Rev. 11:15).

Such blessed news cannot constitute the third woe; we must search for further information. It may be remembered that when we reached the sixth seal ‘the heavens departed as a scroll ... the great day of His wrath is come ...’. The opening of the seventh seal did not lead further into the future that lies beyond the day of wrath. After the solemn silence in heaven for about half an hour, the seven trumpet angels come forward, and again we follow the narrative step by step until the sixth trumpet and its second woe is past, and then again at the seventh the sequence is broken with the same purpose — the supplying of fuller detail concerning the end. Readers familiar with Daniel’s visions will remember the same phenomenon there. The seventh trumpet is evidently pregnant with meaning, for in 10:7 we are told:

‘But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery (secret) of God should be finished (shall be consummated)” (Rev. 10:7).
We observe here ‘in the days’, not merely the day, as though this seventh trumpet is protracted: and ‘when he shall begin, or be about to sound’, again indicating a period of time covered by the sounding of the trumpet. The question arises, if this sounding of the seventh trumpet brings the mystery of God to a conclusion, and places Christ upon the throne of the world, what place in the Divine programme do chapters 12 to 20 occupy? The answer is supplied from several considerations:

(1) We must find a place in this seventh trumpet for unprecedented judgment, for with it is associated the third woe; this would therefore reach forward and include the seven vials of wrath of chapter 15:7.

(2) Verse 18, of chapter 11, gives a summary (see below) of the events that fill out the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which upon examination will be found to be chapters 12 to 20 in brief.

(a) ‘The nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come.
(b) The time of the dead, that they should be judged.
(c) And the rewarding of God’s servants the prophets.
(d) And the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great.
(e) And the destruction of those which destroy the earth’.

This summary is followed by the statement ‘that the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the Ark of His covenant’. Then follow lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, earthquake, and great hail.

It will be evident that the time for judging the dead and giving rewards must reach over to Revelation 20. The anger of the nations and the falling wrath, together with the destruction of those who destroy the earth, are also found in the chapters that follow. Some look upon Revelation 15:5 as the resumption of the subject, and place Revelation 12 to 14 as episodes, not strictly in chronological order, which lead up to the same point by other ways. We feel that this is unnecessary.

Upon the proclamation of heaven’s King, war would be made by Michael upon the Dragon. That this is no fancy is seen by reading Revelation 12:9-12:
'And the great dragon ... was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: FOR the accuser of our brethren is cast down ... Woe to the inhabitors of the earth ... for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath'.

Our search has not been fruitless; here we discover the third woe. The third woe, the proclamation of heaven’s King, and the casting out of Satan therefore synchronize. This settles the position of chapter 12. We must not look upon it as a parenthesis — it is an integral part of the subject. We are also able to say, with tolerable certainty, when the seventh angel sounds, and what time the ‘days’ will cover. Upon the casting down of Satan the woman flees into the wilderness for the space of three and a half years. For exactly the same period the outcast Satan gives his authority and throne to the beast from the abyss (13:5). The aionion gospel will be published at this time also, for one of its statements is ‘for the hour of His judgment is come’. Again, the fall of Babylon, which occupies chapter 17 and 18 leads right on to the Hallelujahs of chapter 19, is linked with these chapters, for another angel follows the herald of the aionion gospel announcing that Babylon is fallen.

Revelation 15 introduces the seven angels having the seven last plagues, and these are not poured out until after the beast has arisen (chap. 13), for those who had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name (all found in Revelation 15) stood upon the sea of glass having the harps of God. Immediately before chapter 12 we read, ‘and the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen the ark of His covenant’ (11:19). In chapter 15, the wording is a little different, ‘the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened’ (verse 5). Under the ‘opening’ of chapter 11, where the emphasis is upon the covenant, the Lord is seen succouring His own during the time of trouble through which they pass; under the ‘opening’ of chapter 15, where the emphasis is upon the
testimony, the Lord is seen visiting with unmitigated judgment the Beast and his followers.

Returning to chapter 11: we would draw attention to the Revised Version, which follows the best texts in verse 17, ‘We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast’. The Authorized Version wrongly adds ‘and art to come’. The Lord had come (see R.V.), and that portion of the ineffable name is fulfilled at the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

The several statements, ‘the Lord, and His Christ’, ‘the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come’, refer back to the prophecy of Psalm 2:

‘The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against His anointed’.
‘Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath’.
‘Yet have I set (anointed) my King upon My holy hill of Zion’ (Psa. 2:2, 5, 6).

The words of Daniel 7:21, 22, and 26, 27, seem very fitting here:

‘I beheld, and the same horn made war with (against) the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom ... But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an aionion kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him’.

The following simple set-out may help the reader to realize the chronology of the seventh trumpet:

**The Time of the Seventh Trumpet, 3.5 years**

The woman fed for 1,260 days (12:6).
A time, times and a half a time (12:14).
The Beast has power 42 months (13:5).
The Seven Vials (chapters 15 and 16).
Babylon falls (14:8).
The final three and a half years of Daniel’s 70 weeks (Dan. 9:27).
If the above suggestion is true, then it would appear that the breaking of the covenant in the midst of the week (Dan. 9) is answered by the opening of the temple containing God's covenant. The giving over of the throne and great authority of Satan to the Beast is answered by the proclamation of Heaven's King (11:15). It is the date also of the catching up of the man child to God and His throne (12:5). The Lord too may descend from heaven to the air immediately after the pouring out of the seventh vial - 'and the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air' — and the hope of 1 Thessalonians 4 will be realized.

When Satan loses his authority of the air (Eph. 2:2), the church of the Acts dispensation will occupy that region.

When Satan is taken and cast into the abyss, the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to Israel.

Thus each section attains its hope upon the ejection of Satan from its destined sphere of glory.

The Mystery of God finishes with the seventh trumpet. That mystery may have several phases and different planes, but all focus in the exalted pre-eminence of Christ.

A great sign in heaven appears in chapter 12. This is the first time the word 'sign' (semeion) occurs in the Apocalypse. The sign is that of a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. A contrast is evidently intended with the woman of chapter 17:

'And the woman was clothed (same word as in 12:1) with purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls ... the woman whom thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth' (Rev. 17:4,18 author's translation).

This city's name is Babylon, and in it is brought to its head the mystery of iniquity (17:5). Chapter 12 also has the sign of a woman, which also represents a city (and the system for which the city stands). The one is the false, the other the true; the one is supported by the beast, the other is attacked by the dragon. In Genesis 37:9 the sun, moon
and eleven stars represent Jacob, his wife, and his eleven sons. The woman is Jerusalem, the city of David and of Israel. She is represented as being on the eve of giving birth to a child.

Another sign is seen in heaven: a great fiery red dragon, having the insignia of the final phase of Gentile dominion, stood before the woman, ready to devour her child as soon as it should be born. The sun, moon and stars, the woman’s emblems, seem to indicate a power from heaven. This is in direct contrast with the seven heads and ten horns and the seven diadems, which plainly indicate the powers of the beast that support the woman of Revelation 17 (see verse 3).

The dragon in the sign is said to draw the third part of the stars from heaven and cast them to the earth. This is taken by some to refer to the fall of Satan away back in the beginning, but we cannot see how this fact can come into the story here. There is no necessity to leave the period under review, for the reference to the stars is interpreted in verse 9, ‘and his angels were cast out with him’, namely, at the moment of the defeat by Michael. The chief interest of the passage however is the man-child that is born:

‘And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne’ (Rev. 12:5).

To whom does this refer? Undoubtedly the words in the first instance are prophetic of Christ Himself, as we find them in Psalm 2. In Revelation 2:26,27 these words are quoted of the overcomer:

‘And he that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father’.

In Chapter 5 we pointed out the way in which the seven churches of chapters 2 and 3 were related to the rest of the book. The reader is referred to that chapter for the complete statement, argument, and illustration. We now
merely extract the portion which bears upon our present study:

THE THYATIRA CHURCH (Rev. 2:18-29).— The woman Jezebel; the morning star; the rod of iron; the depths of Satan; keep works; faith and patience; false prophetess; her children killed.

THE THYATIRA PERIOD (Rev. chapters 12 and 13).— The woman clothed with the sun; the twelve stars; the rod of iron; Satan; keep commandments; patience and faith; false prophet; God's children killed.

The close parallel between the 'church' and the 'period' in each case provides a valuable key to interpretation. There in the future day to which Revelation refers, this man-child is born. This cannot refer to Christ personally, but it can indicate that company of faithful overcomers who share the millennial reign of Christ. The catching up of this man-child to God and His throne precedes the tribulation, it is a complete escape from that day of trouble. In Matthew 24:4-8 we have the beginning of the birth-pains, which are the false christs, wars, famines, pestilences and earthquakes. These have already been indicated in the opening of the seals. They lead the way for the tribulation under the beast and false prophet, and when they reach their meridian, the man-child is born.

After the man-child is caught up, the woman flees into the wilderness. So in Matthew 24, after the period spoken of as the beginning of birth-pains, which synchronizes with Revelation 12:2, we hear of affliction and hatred, of offence and betrayal, of false prophets who deceive. At the same time a gospel activity is indicated, witnessing to all nations before the end comes.

About this same time the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet will be set up in the holy place. This evidently refers to the image of the beast. Daniel's prophecy indicates that the setting up of this abomination occurs in the midst of the final seven years there referred to. This would leave three and a half years for the tribulation to run until 'the end'. So, in perfect harmony, we read that the woman is fed 1,260 days (12:6),
or (as in 12:14), 'a time, times and a half', in line with Daniel's cryptic utterance. Three years and a half therefore before the end, and before the revelation of the Lord, the man-child is caught up. This is the rapture of the overcomers. Some will be 'accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass' (Luke 21:36). The man-child caught up and escaping the tribulation, the woman who flees into the wilderness, and the remnants of her seed which are attacked by the dragon, cannot possibly represent the same company of people. There are the overcomers who are destined to rule; there is the woman, shielded, fed and protected in the wilderness; there are the seed that are left, who are persecuted. It is evident that some believers are left to endure the fierce wrath of the last days. Our attention however must be kept for the present upon the man-child. Verse 11 adds a detail as to the character of these overcomers:

'And they overcame him by (because of) the blood of the Lamb, and by (because of) the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death' (Rev. 12:11).

The sign is a child born under the menace of Satanic destruction; the reality is the faithful testimony of those who loved not their lives unto the death. The dragon waiting to devour is interpreted in verse 10 as 'accusing the brethren before God day and night'. The moment of the rapture of these overcomers is at the sounding of the seventh trumpet:

'Now is come salvation, and strength, and the KINGDOM of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down' (Rev. 12:10).

The words 'our brethren' attract attention. Who is it that says these words? The speaker ('I heard a loud voice saying in heaven') is unnamed, but it is clear, from all other similar references, that it cannot be a man. In Revelation 22:9 an ANGEL says to John:

'I am a Fellow-servant with thee, and with thy brethren the prophets, and with those that keep the words of this book' (Rev. 22:9, Benjamin Wilson, Diaglott).
We adopt the translation given in the Diaglott. It means that the angel and John and the brethren are all upon one common level in this aspect. An angel, therefore, appears to be the one who calls the overcomers ‘brethren’. These overcomers are to be identified with the Church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven (Heb. 12:22,23). These have come to Mount Zion (so had the 144,000, Rev. 14:1); and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. This is also said of the overcomers (Rev. 3:12). These had also come unto an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly.

The casting out of the great dragon to the earth ushers in the third and last woe:

‘Rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! for the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time’ (Rev. 12:12).

The woman is carried away to a place prepared for her, and nourished in the wilderness for the rest of the period until the kingdom is set-up on earth. To this period applies the Lord’s Prayer. ‘Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven’. These words will be the heartfelt utterance of this persecuted company, and while experiencing again the manna in the wilderness, they will pray with real understanding, and not with vain repetition, ‘Give us this day the bread that cometh down upon us’. The word rendered ‘daily’ in the prayer occurs nowhere else in Scripture, nor, as far as we know, in any writing in the Greek language. It is a word which can only be fulfilled by the repetition of the miracle of the manna, and this is what does take place.

The Scriptures speak of several companies of believers, some ready, some unready, some watchful, some asleep, some like wise virgins, some like unwise, one taken, the other left, one child of the woman caught up to God and His throne, other of her seed suffering the wrath of the dragon, some sheltered in heaven and the secret of His presence, others sheltered in the wilderness. The Church
of the One Body, while not connected with these phases of the great plan, should give heed to these differences and seek to profit thereby.
CHAPTER 11
The Two Beasts
Revelation 13

'The Devil is come down having great wrath', and the most appalling programme of evil immediately ensues. The Revised Version places the opening of chapter 13 at the close of chapter 12, and follows the critical Greek texts by reading 'and he stood upon the sand of the sea', instead of the Authorized Version reading 'I stood'. Before attempting to analyse the intricate details of this chapter it will be necessary to look at it as a whole. It is divided into two parts closely related:

1-10 speak of the beast that arises from the sea.
11-18 speak of the beast that arises from the earth.

These two parts run parallel to one another in detail:

Revelation 13

A 1.- And I saw.
B -1.- A beast rise up out of the sea.
C -1,2.- Like unto a leopard, etc.
D -2. His authority. Satanic.
E 3. The deadly wound healed.
F 7. War with the saints.
G 9,10. a 'Let him hear'.
     b 'Here is patience'.

A 11.- And I saw.
B -11.- Another beast arise up out of the earth.
C -11. Like a lamb.
D 12.- His authority. The first beast.
E -12-15.- The deadly wound healed;
the image worshipped.
G 18. b 'Here is wisdom'.
     a 'Let him count'.

Those who have read Dr. Bullinger's *Apocalypse* will have no difficulty in tracing the origin of this structure. We have altered it in a few minor details only. It will help
us to observe these several features more closely. The first beast rises out of the sea called up by the devil who stood upon the sand of the sea. The sea out of which the beast ascends is evidently the same as seen by Daniel in the vision recorded in chapter 7 of his book:

‘I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from the other’ (Dan. 7:2,3).

In Revelation 13 one beast arises out from the sea. When the interpretation of this vision is given to Daniel we read:

‘These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the EARTH’ (Dan. 7:17).

The ‘great sea’ of the vision can be interpreted of the ‘earth’. This is strange if the literal Mediterranean is intended, but if peoples and nations are symbolized here as in other places, the difficulty vanishes. Daniel next describes these beasts: the first was like a lion and had eagle’s wings; the second was like a bear; the third was like unto a leopard with four wings and four heads; the fourth was indescribable, it was dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly, it devoured and broke in pieces the other three beasts, it was diverse from the others and it had ten horns. John in Revelation 13 sees only one beast, but immediately we begin to read its description we realize that he saw the nondescript beast which is the object of Daniel’s inquiry in Daniel 7:19-22, and is here found with all their characteristics merged into one huge combination of Satanic power:

‘And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard (third beast), and his feet were as the feet of a bear (second beast), and his mouth as the mouth of a lion (first beast)’ (Rev. 13:2).

Both are said to have ten horns. Attention is drawn to the leopard having four heads, while the nondescript beast of Revelation 13 has seven. This difference is accounted for simply by seeing that the other two are added to his own and the leopard’s four. These earlier beasts are kings,
each having some special feature represented by the lion, bear, or leopard. The beast of Revelation 13 will be a combination of all these and more.

There is to be observed here a similarity to the final phase of the same Gentile dominion as represented by the great image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. While successive monarchies are positively intended by the various metals (for Daniel thus interprets the parts), nevertheless, when the stone which is Christ’s kingdom strikes the feet of the image, the whole image (gold, silver, brass, iron and clay) is smashed at the same time, indicating that at the time of the end Gentile misrule will be concentrated in one awful monster energized by the devil, and Babylon will be its seat of government. As at the beginning, the power, the throne and the great authority of the beast will be those received from Satan. These are given to the beast in exchange for the greatest thing that Satan covets — world worship. Think of the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. Satan there shows Christ all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and says, ‘All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me’. What a tragedy! How art thou fallen, Lucifer, son of the morning!

One of the heads of the beast was wounded, or ‘slain to death’, and the deadly wound was healed. This travesty of the resurrection of Christ causes all the world to wonder after the beast, and to worship the dragon. The inner thought of the people is expressed by the words, ‘Who is like unto the beast, who is able to make war with him?’ We do not wish to be fanciful, yet we are confident that Scripture fully anticipates the end. Military experts, as well as the man in the street, know that the next war is to be a war in the air.* Britain’s boasted isolation and ocean bulwark have been breached, the invasion of these islands

* Written in 1921. Reprinted in 1951, since the advent of atomic warfare, the language is still more pregnant.
had been considered well-nigh impossible; now we know that the introduction of aerial warfare has broken down all such frontiers. That nation, large or small, which has dominion of the air, will conquer the world. Satan is called 'the Prince of the authority of the air' (Eph. 2:2). Satan gives his great authority to the beast, the result being that all the world at once recognizes his position; 'Who is able to make war with him?'

There are indications that the beast will be small and obscure in its origin, but this will matter nothing then. Daniel sees among the ten horns another little horn, which emulates the beast that carries it by plucking up three of the horns by the roots, as the beast had devoured the three beasts before it:

'The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon the earth ... and the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time' (Dan. 7:23-25).

The parallel in Revelation 13 is remarkable:

'And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months ... to make war with the saints, and to overcome them' (Rev. 13:5-7).

In the light of Daniel 7, we realize that the interest passes from the beast as a whole to 'the horn that shall arise'. This is dealt with more fully in chapter 17, the main outline being sufficient here. The second beast, who is called the false prophet (Rev. 19:20), leads the world to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed. This beast has power to perform miracles, he makes fire come down from heaven, and deceives them that dwell on the earth by means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast. An image to the beast is made, and life is given to it so that the image speaks, all who refuse to worship the beast are ordered to be killed.
Who that reads these words does not think of the image in the plain of Dura, the dulcimers and the sackbut and all kinds of music, the command, ‘whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace’. We remember the noble answer of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego:

‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not (what a marvellous lack of worldly wisdom! What a ruthless lack of compromise! but if not), be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up’ (Dan. 3:16-18).

The glorious testimony of these three, together with the equally glorious witness presently of Daniel himself under a similar trial (6:1-28) while being historic fact concerned personally with the four men named, is placed in the prophecy, illustrating for us more plainly than any vision could portray the days of the beast and the false prophet, and the sterling testimony of those who:

‘overcame him by (because of) the blood of the Lamb, and by (because of) the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death’ (Rev. 12:11).

As Nebuchadnezzar testified that one like unto a son of God walked with the faithful three in the furnace, so angelic fellowship will be granted to those who are faithful even unto death.

The epistles of Paul speak of the end of this age in terms of apostasy and darkness. Let us not be merely moved as we read the splendid courage and faithful witness of these men of old, let us also in our day and generation hold fast the faithful word, even to the extent of saying the ‘But if not’ of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

We have observed that the personal incidents interwoven in Daniel’s prophecy were in themselves prophetic. This is true of chapter 4 as well as of chapter 3. Nebuchadnezzar himself is smitten by the watchers, and
during a period of seven times becomes to all intents and purposes a beast of the field. Had the event no prophetic meaning, the cryptic words ‘seven times’ would not have been written; we should have read ‘seven years’, or ‘seven weeks’ or whatever period is intended.

In the lycanthropy* of the head of gold may be seen the nature of Gentile dominion in the sight of God. It is that of a beast, and as a monster it emerges at the close, including in its composite character all the cruelty, oppression, and power of the kingdoms that had passed away. We will not attempt a consideration of details in Revelation 13 until we have seen one further connection, this time with 2 Thessalonians 2.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

A 1-3. The Day of the Lord, not yet.
B  3. The apostasy.
C  3. The revelation of the man of sin.
D  4. Showing himself that he is God (see Rev. 13:6-8).

A  5,6. He holdeth fast, his own season.
B  7. The mystery of iniquity.
C  8. The revelation of the wicked one.
D  9. With all power, and signs, and lying wonders.

We have seen that the whole chapter (Rev. 13) is devoted to the beast from the sea and the beast from the earth.

Again we acknowledge the help received from Dr. E.W. Bullinger’s Apocalypse in making this comparison. Here we have one called ‘the man of sin, the son of perdition’, and his recorded act is that he:

‘opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God’ (2 Thess. 2:4).

* Lycanthropy = a form of madness involving the delusion of being usually a wolf, with changed appetites, voice, etc.
We believe this to be one individual, and not the whole beast of Revelation 13. This surely is the abomination of desolation in the holy place, and is the signal for the believer to flee from Judaea to the mountains. This is but the plain way of speaking about the woman carried on eagle wings and nourished in the wilderness.

The Thessalonians were informed that the Day of the Lord could not have set in because several events had not taken place. The day could not come until the apostasy had set in. While 'he holdeth fast' the final wickedness cannot be manifested, but as soon as Satan is cast out of heaven, he comes down to the earth in great wrath and stands upon the sand of the sea, then is the moment for the final throw. God himself is challenged and the world worships the dragon; truly a burning fiery furnace for the faithful few in those days. No wonder each of the seven Churches have special promises given to the overcomer. In Revelation 19:20 we read:

'And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast'.

Note this order, he deceived them that had received, they received first, they were not deceived first. Now note 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12:

'Whose presence (parousia) is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a (the) lie, that they all might be damned (judged) who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness'.

Here the same order is followed, they are deceived, because they would not receive, they will not believe the truth, they do believe the lie; not merely a lie, but the lie. John 8:44, speaking of the Devil, says, 'he is a liar, and the father of it'. Christ is the truth, the old man is the lie (Eph.

# See note on Antichrist on page 310
4:21-25, 'wherefore putting away the lie'). All Satan's works are 'the lie'. With a lie he deceived our first parents, saying, 'ye shall not surely die'; with some similar lie he sets God aside in favour of himself and his false Messiah at the end. If all this iniquity finds its home in Babylon, it has but returned to its original home. Speaking of the Babylonian apostasy, Romans 1:18-32 uses terms similar to 2 Thessalonians 2.

'Who changed the truth of God into a (the) lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator' (Rom. 1:25).

'They ... changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man' (Rom. 1:23).

The words of 2 Thessalonians 2 are further echoed in Romans 1:32, where it speaks of those who 'have pleasure in them that do them'. The miracles wrought by the energy of Satan are called 'powers and signs and wonders of falsehood'. These three words are used in Hebrews 2:4 without the words 'of falsehood' to describe the miracles of the Acts of the Apostles. This fact should be enough to teach us that the miracles performed by the false prophet will be real enough even as Jannes and Jambres were able in many instances to work miracles in opposition to the miracles of Moses. The peril with which many so-called Pentecostal movements are fraught becomes clear in the light of this fact. The work of Satan will be such a counterfeit of truth, so as to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. 'Here is the patience and faith of the saints'. In the somewhat confused state of the Greek text of Revelation 13:10, the safe course to follow is to turn to the Hebrew original to which this passage alludes:

'And when he cometh, he shall smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as are for death to death; and such as for captivity to captivity; and such as are for the sword to the sword' (Jer. 43:11).

Revelation 13:10 therefore should be rendered:

'If any one is for captivity into captivity he goeth; if any one is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he is killed; here is the patience and faith of the saints' (see also 14:12, 13 for similar thought).
For forty-two months it will be given to the beast to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Many will have the patience and faith of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and say, 'but if not ... we will not serve thy gods'. To this period belong such Psalms as 10:

'Why standest Thou afar off, O LORD? Why hidest Thou Thyself in times of (a time) of trouble? The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor ... the wicked boasteth of his heart's desire ... the wicked through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God' (Psa. 10:1-4).

The Psalm closes with the coming of the Lord:

'To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that THE MAN OF THE EARTH may no more oppress' (Psa. 10:18).

Again, Psalm 11:3 says:

'If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?'

The answer is supplied in the next verses:

'The LORD is in His Holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men. The LORD TRIETH the righteous' (Psa. 11:4,5).

'Here is the patience and faith of the saints'.

'Upon the wicked He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup' (Psa. 11:6).

Here we have in one verse the awful outpouring of wrath detailed in the Revelation. Psalm 12 again deals with the same period of trial:

'Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men ... the wicked walk on every side, when the vilest of the sons of men are exalted' (Psa. 12:1,8 author's translation).

Psalm 14:1 sums up the great man of Satan's right hand:

'The fool hath said in his heart, let God not be' (Author's translation).

Doubtless in that day of darkness the 'fools' will be those who trust in a god who saves them not, who cry to a
god who is afar off. ‘Here is the patience and faith of the saints’, ‘the just shall live by his faith’, ‘yet a little while and He shall come, and will not tarry’. Do we wonder that, patient as they were, John, who was their brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus, records the cry:

‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?’ (Rev. 6:10).

John expresses the one great cry that will go up to the throne on high from that awful arena, ‘Even so, come, Lord Jesus’.

‘Oh that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come down’ (Isa. 64:1).

*The mark of the beast*, what visions this calls up! *The number of his name*, on this theme what volumes have been written! Yet must we add our effort in the endeavour to understand what God has written for our learning.

Those who will not worship the beast will be put to death; the refusal of the mark, the name, or the number will be punished by hunger and ostracism, a living death. We must first bring together in some sort of order the references to this name, mark and number, and observe anything that will lead us on in the understanding of the problem.

**Mark**

‘And he causeth all, even the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, to receive a mark on their right hands, or upon their foreheads, that no man should be able to buy or to sell except he who had the mark’ (Rev. 13:16,17 author’s translation).

‘If any one worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth his mark on his forehead, or on his hand, even he shall drink of the wine of God’s fury’ (Rev. 14:9,10 author’s translation).

‘And there broke out a noisome and grievous sore upon the men who had the mark of the beast’ (Rev. 16:2 author’s translation).

‘The miracles ... with which he had deceived them that had received the mark of the beast’ (Rev. 19:20 author’s translation).
THE TWO BEASTS

‘And whosoever did not worship the beast ... and did not receive the mark on their foreheads and on their hands, both lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years’ (Rev. 20:4 author’s translation).

NOTE.—The words ‘and over his mark’, in 15:2, are omitted by G. L. T. Tr. A., W.H. and R.V.

This gives six occurrences of the word ‘mark’ (charagma).

The Mark of his Name

‘They have no rest day and night ... whosoever receiveth the mark of his name’ (Rev. 14:11 author’s translation).

The Name

‘That no one should be able to buy or sell except he who has the mark, or the name of the beast’ (Rev. 13:17 author’s translation).

The Number of his Name

‘That no one should be able to buy or sell except he who has ... the number of his name’ (Rev. 13:17 author’s translation).

‘Those who had gotten the victory ... from the number of his name’ (Rev. 15:2 author’s translation).

It will be seen that while the mark and the name are spoken of separately, both the expression ‘the mark of his name’ and ‘the number of his name’ point to the fact that in both cases it is the NAME that is significant. Before going further into ‘the number of his name’ we shall learn a little by contrast from the emphasis laid in this book upon the name of the Lord and the application of that name to the believers of the period:

The Name (the Lord Himself)

‘Hast not denied My name’ (Rev. 3:8).

‘He had a name written, that no man knew’ (Rev. 19:12).

‘His name is called the Word of God’ (Rev. 19:13).

‘On His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords’ (Rev. 19:16).

The second reference demands a moment’s consideration before proceeding. The Vatican ms. reads in 19:12, ‘many diadems having names written, and a name
written, which no one knows except Himself’. This gives us our first contrast:

The Beast

‘Upon his horns ten crowns (diadems) and upon his head names of blasphemy’ (Rev. 13:1).

Christ

‘Upon His head many diadems, having names written’ (Rev. 19:12 author’s translation).

Surely it is patent to all that the name written on the many diadems of Christ will be the exact contrast to those blasphemous names written on the heads of the beast. If ‘blasphemy’ sums up the seven names of the beast, the words ‘holiness to the Lord’ will sum up the names on the diadems of the King-Priest of God. Another name, written on the thigh of the coming Christ, is ‘King of kings, and Lord of lords’. This name is in direct contrast to Gentile domination. Daniel uses the words in his interpretation to Nebuchadnezzar of the head of gold, ‘Thou, O king, art a KING OF KINGS ... ruler over all’ (Dan. 2:37,38), and we meet it again in Revelation 17:18, ‘and the woman (supported by the beast) ... is that great city, which reigneth over the KINGS of the earth’.

The Name (the believers)

‘Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, ... and I will write on him THE NAME of My God ... and My new name’ (Rev. 3:12).

‘An 144,000, having His name, and the name of His Father on their foreheads’ (Rev. 14:1 author’s translation).

‘And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads’ (Rev. 22:4).

Here is a most evident contrast with the devotees of the beast. The world at that time will be divided into two classes, the huge majority, those that receive the mark of the beast; the persecuted minority, those that deny not the name of the Lord, and who receive the name of the Lamb on their foreheads. Here we must examine a second contrast which is instructive.
The name of the BEAST upon the foreheads of those who dwell on the earth.

The names of the LAMB upon the foreheads of the 144,000.

Christ in His twofold character in this book is Lamb and Lion. The beast in his composite character is a combination of Leopard, Bear, and Lion. The Lion in both represents kingship, and this is common to both (see quotation from Daniel 2 above). The Lamb is the Redeemer, the Leopard and the Bear the Destroyer. Some are marked with the name of the Redeemer, others are numbered among those that destroy the earth; the former in harmony with that name are ‘redeemed’ from among men (14:4), the latter in harmony with their mark are ‘destroyed’ (11:18).

We now look at the ‘number of his name’. As we have received help by placing Christ in contrast with the Beast, we will continue to do so as we examine this number. The reader is probably aware that both the Hebrew and the Greek alphabets serve for both letters and numbers. The name ‘Jesus’ in Greek characters is written IESOUS. The numerical value of each letter in order is 10, 8, 200, 70, 400, 200, which added together give 888; a great contrast to the number of the beast, 666. In the same way Lord (Kurios) = 800. We have already had occasion to refer to the typical character of Daniel and his three friends. It is highly significant that their Hebrew names give the very same number as the name Jesus!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hananiah</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mishael</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azariah</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>888</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Without pursuing this feature further we feel that in this recognition of the lordship of ‘Jesus’, and the absolute refusal to bow down and worship the image of the beast, the contrast with the number and the name of the beast is
manifested, and by the contrast the character of the beast is brought to light.

Before proceeding further we pause to observe that Irenaeus tells us that some ancient copies of the Apocalypse in his day read 616 instead of 666. While there is no doubt that 666 is the true reading, the fact that such a number as 616 found advocates suggests that there was a reason for the alteration, and that it must not be attributed to carelessness on the part of the scribe. It will be remembered that when the apostle wrote to the Thessalonians concerning the advent of the beast in 2 Thessalonians 2 he uses rather cryptic language, referring to something he had told them which he would not commit to writing. Again, when Jeremiah wished to refer to the King of Babylon he refers to him as Sheshach (Jer. 25:26)*. The Massorah explains that this word stands for Babel. The system upon which this is worked is the reversal of the Alphabet; thus, since ‘b’ is the second letter of the Hebrew Alphabet, and ‘sh’, the second from the end, ‘sh’ stands for ‘b’; so with the place of ‘l’ and ‘ch’, respectively. Jeremiah, Paul, and John use these cryptic methods when speaking of the beast.

The suggestion that John in the Apocalypse refers to the Hebrew is not to be despised. In the Talmud and other Rabbinical writings the words Neron Kesar (the Caesar Nero) often occur. The gematria of the Hebrew words is 666. If, however, this name be written in the Latin way, Nero Caesar, it amounts to 616, the alternative reading of Irenaeus’ reference. Now, if Nero was intended by John and by Paul, we can understand how convenient at the time the method of Jeremiah 25:26 would be. Moreover, if some wrote the name after the Latin fashion they would be tempted to substitute 616 for 666.

The reader by this time may be asking, Does the writer believe that Rome is the Beast of Revelation 13? We will

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* See The Companion Bible note on Jeremiah 25:26, concerning Sheshac.
answer that question by asking another. Was John the Baptist Elijah? John the Baptist when asked the question said *he was not* (see John 1); Christ when asked the question said *he was*:

'I say unto you, That Elias is come already ... then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist' (Matt. 17:12,13).

'For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John, AND IF YE WILL RECEIVE IT, this is Elias, which was for to come' (Matt. 11:13,14).

'He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias' (Luke 1:17).

John was Elias, if ... ! Rome would have been the Beast of Revelation 13, if ... ! the 'if' here was the repentance of Israel. Israel however did not repent, and the nation was set aside, and Rome was not the beast. When the Lord Jesus commenced His ministry He could say 'THE TIME is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the gospel' (Mark 1:15). Had Israel repented (we speak after the manner of men) there must have been at hand all material ready for the final sphere of Gentile dominion. Surely the times that could produce a Herod (Acts 12 note carefully) could produce the Antichrist! surely the age that could see the rise of such as Nero could produce the beast!

One of the objections to Rome is that it never really held possession of Babylon. This is not by any means a difficulty, neither is it a valid objection. Jerusalem, not Babylon, is the key. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, each in turn held JERUSALEM, and that fact constituted it the successor in Gentile dominion. Rome it was that compelled the mother of Christ to travel to Bethlehem. Rome's penny it was that was shown to the Lord, Rome it was that crucified Christ, Rome's soldiers that guarded His tomb, Rome itself was the final place of appeal of the apostle Paul. Upon the failure of Israel the prophetic Image of Daniel enters into mystery. The first three dynasties are named, Babylon, Persia, Greece, the rest remained unnamed. Rome succeeded to the
domination of Jerusalem, and after Rome came the Turk. This lasted until the taking of Jerusalem by General Allenby.

The decision of the United Nations Organization (UNO), in 1949, to place Jerusalem under international control is a continuance of this essential feature and links the present grouping of the nations of the world with the subdivision of the Image into two feet and the ten toes at the time of the end. This attempt to dominate Jerusalem will, as Zechariah 12:2,3 indicates, precipitate the great conflict at the end.


The diagram opposite is an attempt to illustrate the essential features of this great prophetic Image but our knowledge is too limited for us to make anything more than a suggestion regarding the shape of things to come.

Apart from the computation of the number of the name we can learn something more concerning the character of this final phase by the occurrences of the number elsewhere and its significance. Take for example the revenue of Solomon in one year (1 Kings 10:14), namely, 666 talents of gold. Surely we can see something more than a hint in this that one of the gods of Gentile dominion will be Mammon:

'The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyme wood, etc.' (Rev. 18:12,13).

From the battle of Actium (31 B.C.) to the Saracen conquest (A.D. 636) the period of Rome's domination of Jerusalem is 666 years. Again, we still speak of 360 degrees of the circle, 60 minutes, 60 seconds. This is a survival of the Assyrian system of reckoning, which has six as its main factor. Strangely enough Rome's numerals,
The Two Beasts

B.C.

HEAD OF GOLD
BABYLONIAN EMPIRE

496

BATTLE OF ARBELA 331

MEDO-PERSIAN EMPIRE

BELLY AND THIGHS OF BRASS

GRECIAN EMPIRE

BREAST AND ARMS OF SILVER

DAN IV

DAN VII

DAN VIII

DAN IX

210th YEAR

EVEN

GOING-OUT OF DECREES 454 B.C.
TO REBUILD CITY
977 749 YEARS
408 TEMPLE DEDICATED

62 x 7
63

RAME

HE GOAT

CUTTING OFF OF MELECHIAM 67 D.N.

ACTS 28:31

PERIOD JEWISH HISTORY IN SCRIPTURE ENDS

LO-AMMI PERIOD

BEGINNING OF SORROWFUL FINAL WEEK

END OF ROMAN EMPIRE 636

TIME IS NOT RECKONED WHERE ISRAEL IS LO-AMMI

END OF POMHAMMEDAN EMPIRE 1917

FEET OF IRON AND CLAY

LION BEAR LEOPARD REV XII

DIVERSE BEAST HEADS 10 HORNED REL 12

12 YEAR
which we still use on our clock dials, inscriptions etc., are six in number, I. V. X. L. C. D. and their numerical value is 666. Six is the number of man. Man was created on the sixth day; for six years Athaliah usurped the throne of David (2 Kings 11; 2 Chron. 23), six words are used for man in the Bible. Goliath, one of the many foreshadowings of the beast, was 6 cubits high, had 6 pieces of armour, and his spear’s head weighed 600 shekels. Nebuchadnezzar’s image which he set up was 60 cubits high and 6 cubits broad, introduced by 6 instruments of music. Dr. Bullinger tells us that the Gematria of the Hebrew words of Daniel 3:1, which describe the setting up of the image, is 4,662, the factors of which are 7 x 666.

Further, we do not use the word Antichrist when speaking of the beast of Revelation 13. The word does not occur in the Revelation. The Antichrist is spoken of by John in his first epistle. The beast will be the great world power at the end, the Antichrist will be the great apostate false Messiah. The beast of Revelation 13 is not a false Messiah, it is a political power, Nero well foreshadows the beast, Herod the Antichrist. The Antichrist will sell the people of Israel and help on the time of trouble, he will be a renegade Jew; Judas the betrayer was called ‘the son of perdition’. By confusing these two titles (Antichrist and Beast) we are apt to mystify ourselves and misunderstand the Scriptures. The number of man, the number of the name of the beast, apart from the cryptic reference to the individual himself, tell us that he will be the climax man, deified, worshipped — and destroyed with the brightness of the appearing of the Son of God. The League of Nations* is preparatory to the development of the ten Kings, the ten toes of the image.

# One thousand was represented by ☦ hence by ☦ and later, by the letter M.

* At the time of going to press of the Second Edition of This Prophecy, the next development urged by many was ‘A Federation of Nations’, which may forge another link in the chain.

This developed, in 1949, into the United Nations Organization.
In immediate succession, and as we have seen in designed contrast, to the reference to the enforcing under penalty of death of the mark of the beast, comes the vision of the 144,000, having the name of the Lamb and of His Father in their foreheads. In chapter 7 we have the sealing of the 144,000, followed by a great multitude whom no man could number; in chapter 14 the relation between the two companies is shown. The 144,000 are 'firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb'; the great multitude is the harvest that follows.

The elect company are seen standing upon mount Zion. Zion, or Sion, means a stronghold:

upon Zion God will yet set His King (Psa. 2:6).

'out of Zion' shall come:

the Salvation of Israel (Psa. 14:7),
strengthening (Psa. 20:2),
the shining of God (Psa. 50:2),
the rod of Messiah's strength (Psa. 110:2),
blessing to, and from, the Lord (Psa. 128:5; 135:21),
the law (Isa. 2:3).

It is evidently central, a place of administration and of strength.

The epistle to the Hebrews in chapter 12 speaks of two companies which bear a relation to each other, very parallel with that of the firstfruits and harvest here. The first part of Hebrews 12 speaks of sons, the second of the firstborn, introduced by the reference to Esau and his birthright. One of the statements made concerning their position is that they had 'come unto mount Sion'. In both places mount Sion is connected with the overcomers, and their victory is the theme of the new song (which none could learn by rote, but only through experience) before the throne.

Singing is with understanding, and the nature of their victory is explained in Revelation 14:4,5, 'they are
virgins’. In our English language a virgin usually means a female, but in the Greek it is not necessarily so. Here in Revelation 14:4 it cannot be so, for the passage reads, ‘these are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins’. We do not wish to enlarge upon this, but feel we must warn our readers against spiritualizing the passage away. Romans 1:18-32, the history of Israel from Balaam’s stumblingblock to Solomon’s shame, the prophetic utterances of Paul, Peter, and Jude concerning the character of the end, and the testimony of the Revelation itself, all go to show that moral uncleanness, Satanic religion, doctrines of demons, and idolatry go hand in hand.

The transition from the truth to the lie is strongly marked in Romans 1:18-32, ‘the lie’ being the one great covering title of the whole Satanic programme, which includes uncleanness and a reprobate mind. One need have but the slightest acquaintance with the undercurrent of life in great cities, to know that should immorality ever receive the sanction of religion, devotees would flock in their millions to its shrine.

These 144,000 sealed ones have been preserved from the doctrines of Balaam or Jezebel; ‘they are virgins’; ‘in their mouth was not found (the) LIE, for they are blameless’. All the best texts read lie instead of ‘guile’, they are blameless with regard to the LIE. The lie is believed as a result of not receiving the love of the truth (2 Thess. 2). The overcomers who repudiate the lie stand on mount Zion; those who cannot enter into the city, the holy Jerusalem, include everything common or that maketh an abomination and a LIE. Those written in the Lamb’s book of life alone have access. Only those thus written are able to refuse the mark of the beast:

‘And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, each one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb slain’ (Rev. 13:8).

* See also pages 399 and 400 for note concerning this rendering.
While truth wears different aspects and presents itself under different forms according to the dispensation under which it appears, it is nevertheless one; the same is true of error. The truth has ever been the mark of God’s children, and the lie the mark of the devil’s; ‘the devil ... is a liar, and the father of it’ (John 8:44); God is ‘a God of truth, and without iniquity’ (Deut. 32:4); He is a God that cannot lie (Titus 1:2). The apostasy of the Revelation is spoken of in Isaiah 28:15 as a covenant with death and an agreement with hell and a refuge of lies. The poor and needy of that day, the Lord’s own flock, they find in the Lord ‘a refuge from the storm’ (Isa. 25:4). ‘His truth shall be their shield and buckler’ (Psa. 91:4). The doctrine of the Antichrist is summed up by John in his first epistle as a lie, and those who teach it as liars:

‘I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that NO LIE is of the truth: who is THE LIAR, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is THE ANTICHRIST, that denieth the Father and the Son’ (1 John 2:21,22 author’s translation).

If we turn to the epistles of the Mystery, the same teaching is present:

‘But you have not thus learned Christ, if indeed you heard Him, and were taught by Him, as the TRUTH is in Jesus (namely) to have put away from you the former manner of life, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and to have put on the new man which according to God has been created in holiness and righteousness of TRUTH; wherefore, having put off THE LIE, speak every man TRUTH with his neighbour’ (Eph. 4:20-25 author’s translation).

Here the lie is the old man and his deeds. This is fundamental. The blasphemy of the beast, the denial of the Antichrist, the well-nigh universal apostasy of the end, are all so many manifestations of MAN as he is. The regeneration of Israel, the overcomers who enter the city, the membership of the One Body, these are various manifestations of the new man, the new creation. Revelation 14, therefore, while speaking primarily of that future day of trial, speaks to us now. All that goes to make
up the lie we must repudiate, all the truth we must embrace. Our armour will be useless if our loins are not first girded with truth, our gospel will be powerless if it is not 'the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation'. Righteousness and holiness will be fictitious if they be not of the truth. The worldliness of modern Christendom is the lie, and those who are of the truth have no place other than OUTSIDE. We are not to assume to ourselves the blessings and privileges of the 144,000, but we have our own victory and its blessed results in view. Where we are at one with all people of God through all dispensations, is in our attitude towards the truth, the lie, and the overcoming.

'And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having the aionion gospel to preach unto those sitting upon the earth, and upon every nation, and tribe, and language and people, saying with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment is come, and worship Him that made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters'" (Rev. 14:6,7 author's translation).

Before considering the 'everlasting gospel' we ask the reader's attention to the people to whom that gospel is preached. 'Them that dwell on the earth' appear to be one section, and 'every nation, and tribe, and language and people', appear to be the other. It will be noticed, however, in our rendering above, that we have the words, 'those sitting upon the earth'. Our endeavour must always be first to realize what God says, and then to seek to understand the meaning of His words.

The expression, 'them that dwell upon the earth', is frequent in the Revelation, and the ordinary reader would most probably take it for granted that 14:6 was but another occurrence of the familiar phrase. This is not so however. The usual expression is found in 13:8, hoi katoikountes epi tes ges. Katoikeo means 'to dwell', and is a cognate of oikos, 'a house'. The best texts do not read this word in 14:6 but kathemai. This word is of frequent occurrence in the Apocalypse, and in many cases it has a special connection with the idea of authority.
In Revelation 4:2,3,4,9; 5:13; 7:10,15; 11:16; 19:4; 20:11; 21:5, the references are to 'sitting upon a throne'. In Revelation 6:2,4,5,8; 9:17; 19:11,18,19,21, the references are to 'sitting upon a horse'. Revelation 14:14,15,16, refers to 'one sitting upon a cloud'. None of these passages convey the idea of merely resting, but of sitting in authority, as king, as elder, as soldier. There are but five more occurrences of the word in Revelation, and they will identify the people to whom the aionion gospel is preached, and illuminate the true meaning of the clause that follows their mention:

'The great whore that SITTETH upon many waters' (17:1).
'A woman sit (SITTING) upon a scarlet coloured beast' (17:3).
'The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman SITTETH, and they are seven kings' (17:9,10).
'The waters .... where the whore SITTETH, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues' (17:15).
'I SIT a queen' (18:7).

There is no passage in the Revelation where the verb 'to sit' is used in any other way. Every occurrence has to do with rule. The one that 'sitteth' on the many waters, and upon the beast, is Babylon. We can now view chapter 14:6 in clearer light. 'They that sit upon the earth' are the leaders of the great Babylonian Apostasy.

The next consideration must be the relation which this great system has to those who are spoken of as 'every nation', etc. As the A.V. stands, the gospel is addressed:

(1) To them that dwell upon the earth.
(2) To every nation, etc.

But the word epi which occurs in the phrase 'upon the earth' is repeated in the next sentence, 'and upon every nation'. With 17:15 as our authority we can positively say that the meaning is that those same ones who are said to sit upon the earth, are also said to sit upon every nation, etc., for the very enumeration comes in 17:15. The beast of 13:7 received authority over (epi) every tribe, and people, and language and nation. This was the extent of
Nebuchadnezzar’s dominion. His herald addressed the king’s command to ‘people, nations, and languages’ (Dan. 3:4,7). The very strangeness of the expression, namely that of ‘languages’ being ‘commanded’ to fall down and worship Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image, is a connecting link with Revelation 14.

Babylon and all that it means will sit upon the very earth and its peoples. The scene on the plains of Dura* will be re-enacted. The image of the beast takes the place of the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar, and death is the penalty, as before, for disobedience. The very throne of God is usurped. The Creator Himself is denied. That throne is described in chapter 4, where we found our first occurrence of the word ‘sit’. There, too, heaven’s worship goes up to God as ‘Creator’ (4:11). Soon, evolution and kindred theories will have done their work. The whole of Science and Philosophy will have become enslaved by their teaching, and God Himself will be scientifically reduced to a cipher. Then the Man of Sin will mount the throne. Then the false prophet will demand universal worship of the beast and his image, and then will go forth the ‘everlasting gospel’.

We trust the reader is sufficiently acquainted with the meaning and usage of aion and aionios to obviate the necessity of enlarging upon them here. The words mean, ‘an age, that which has to do with an age’, and this gospel announced from heaven by an angel is peculiarly fitted for the awful time of Babylon’s last grasp for godless power. Unlike the gospel of the Kingdom, or the gospel of Grace, it does not call for repentance or for faith, but simply to ‘fear God’. Do any of the oppressed nations, tribes, languages and peoples, hearken to this elemental message? Turn to chapter 15. There a company are seen who have

* A plain in the province of Babylon, where Nebuchadnezzar set up a golden image — see Daniel 3:1.
overcome the beast, his image and his mark, and sing unto the Lord as to the King of the Ages*, saying:

'Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? for Thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest' (Rev. 15:4).

This is an echo of the evangel that saved them:

'Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters' (Rev. 14:7).

We are too prone to take our own times as a standard for judging other periods. We have no authority to preach as a gospel the fear and the worship of the Creator, but this will be the 'good news' for the time of Babylonian supremacy. Further light upon this necessity will be found in Romans 1:18-32. There it will be seen that the apostasy of the Gentile world in its beginnings foreshadows its final phase (Rev. 13; 14; 17; 18). The nations knew God, they were taught His relationship to creation, but they 'glorified' Him not as God; they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, birds, beasts, and reptiles. They changed the truth of God into the Lie (see pages 312-314 for the close connection that this establishes between the 144,000 and this aionion gospel) and 'worshipped' and served the creature more than the Creator. Babel, at the beginning (Gen. 11), in the middle (Dan. 3), and at the end (Rev. 13) remains the same. Deliverance, however, comes to the oppressed peoples, when the image is broken, and the Son of man comes. Then will be given to Him 'dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him'.

Turning back once more to Revelation 14, let us note what immediately follows the announcing of this gospel,

* * See also pages 328 and 329 concerning the rendering of Rev. 15:3.
‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen’, showing by its sequence the true nature of ‘those that sit upon the earth’.

The first angelic message in the days of the beast and the false prophet will be that of the **aionion** gospel. The second which immediately follows will herald the fall of Babylon. As this is dealt with in detail in chapters 17 and 18, we pass on to note the message of the third angel:

‘And another, a third angel, followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth his mark on his forehead or on his hand, even he shall drink of the wine of God’s fury, which is prepared undiluted in the cup of His wrath; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth for the ages of the ages, and they have no respite day or night who are worshiping the beast and his image, and if anyone receiveth the mark of his name’ (Rev. 14:9-11 author’s translation).

Here is the solemn, the awful witness of the third angel. In Psalm 75:8 we read:

‘For in the hand of the **LORD** there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and He poureth out the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them’.

There is in many prophecies of this period an indication that the punishments Israel are made to suffer under the permission of God will be ultimately turned upon the great oppressor. For instance, in Psalm 73:10 it is ‘His people’ to whom ‘the waters of a full cup are wrung out’. So in Isaiah 51:17:

‘Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the **LORD** the cup of His fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out’.

Look at Isaiah 51:9-16. There is the wounding of the dragon, the fear of a man that shall die and the fury of the oppressor. Here, too, is an allusion to the terms of the **aionion** gospel:

‘And forgettest the **LORD** thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth’ (Isa. 51:13).
Then in Isaiah 51:22,23 comes the great transfer:

'Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: but I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over'.

Again in Jeremiah 51:7 we read:

'Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad'.

Then comes the parallel with Revelation 14:8:

'Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed ... it is the vengeance of the LORD, the vengeance of His temple' (Jer. 51:8-11).

The language of Revelation 14:10,11, is based upon a passage in Isaiah 34. The whole chapter should be read, and its bearing upon the Revelation noted. We draw attention to one verse in particular. The land of Idumea is to become:

'... burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever' (Isa. 34:9,10).

We would not seek to diminish the awfulness of the punishment which falls upon those who worship the beast, but we do ask that this terrible penalty shall not be unscripturally applied to unsaved sinners of all times and places. It is the peculiar punishment of a special class. 'Day and night' apply to time, not to eternity. A strict adherence to the tense of the verb makes us translate in Revelation 14:11:

'They have no rest day nor night, who are worshipping the beast', as though their torment is already in operation while they live upon the earth. Further, chapters 17 and 18 expand and expound these verses. There we read:

'How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her' (18:7).
'She shall be utterly burned with fire ... the kings of the earth ... shall bewail her ... when they shall see the smoke of her burning' (18:8,9).

'With violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all ... and again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever' (18:21 to 19:3).

During the millennial kingdom Babylon will remain a burnt mountain, a monument of wrath to all the nations of the earth. During the same period the smoke of the torment of those who received the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image will be an awful object lesson to those in the heavens. Both symbols will pass away with the 'former things' when the ages of the ages finish their course, and when He that sits upon the throne shall say, 'Behold, all things are new' (21:5).

There is another portion of the angel's message which must receive attention, namely, the words of 14:12,13:

'Here is the patience of the saints — those who keep the commandment of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, for their works follow with them' (Author's translation).

In Revelation 13:10 we have an explanation of what constitutes 'The patience and the faith of the saints' — captivity and sword under the cruel oppression of the beast. This is expanded in 14:12, which, coming in immediate sequence to the reference to those who worship the image of the beast, suggests the character of their trial. A voice speaks from heaven, saying, 'Write'. On four different occasions the apostle is commanded in the Apocalypse to write.
The command ‘to write’ in the Apocalypse

A 1:11, 19;
   chap. 2 and 3. Write to the seven churches.
B 14:13. Write, Blessed are the dead.
B 19:9. Write, Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.
A 21:5. Write, Behold, I make all things new.

There is a real connection between 14:13 and 19:9 ‘Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth’. The death here spoken of is evidently martyrdom. Under the fierce persecution of the beast the believer is called upon to think of death as ‘blessed’ rather than by yielding to pressure to purchase an extension of life by worshipping the image. Such overcomers are specially mentioned in Revelation 15:1-4 and 20:4, and are clearly referred to in 14:1 (cf. 13:16). See also second half of Hebrews 11:35. These enter into ‘rest’ and their works following them bear testimony to their victory over the beast and the false prophet.

The same word is used of both classes. The one have ‘no rest day and night’, the other ‘rest from their troubles’. The martyrs under the fifth seal likewise are told to ‘rest’ a little season until their fellow servants should also be killed (6:11). There is an evident reference here to chapter 14:13.

The passage which we have here before us, brings very vividly to light the two classes into which the actors in the Revelation are to be divided. It is not so much saved and unsaved, but

- The worship of the Beast or the worship of God.
- The receiving of his mark or the mark of the Father.
- The earth dwellers or the pilgrims.
- Those who bow to the Beast or the overcomers.
- Those who save their lives by idolatry or those who love not their lives unto the death.

The one class constitute the great supper of God (19:17), and the other is called unto the marriage supper of
the Lamb (19:9). The one class is devoted to a special and signal punishment, the other to a special and signal reward. The one class is ranged under the dragon and the other under the Lamb.

The exhortation to patience will be needed in those days of trial and fierce temptation. John could write sympathetically of this, for he describes himself as ‘Your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus’ (1:9). The churches of Ephesus and Thyatira are commended for their patience, and the church of Philadelphia will receive a wonderful deliverance because it keeps the Word of the Lord’s patience.

The only other references to patience are those of Revelation 13:10 and 14:12, ‘Here is patience’, both of which refer directly and exclusively to the period of the beast and the false prophet. The references in other Scriptures, particularly those in the epistle of James, are also very applicable to this period of tested faith.

Our lot is cast in a different day. Our trials may be of a different character, but to us as to all saints at all times the Word is true, ‘Ye have need of patience’ (Heb. 10:36). ‘Let patience have her perfect work’ (James 1:4).

Immediately following the cry of the third angel and the indication that wickedness had reached its height comes the twofold scene of judgment, represented under the figures of the harvest and the vintage.

It will enable us to see more clearly the bearing of these visions upon the theme of the book and their place in its outworking if we take a wider view than the limits of chapter 14.

On page 114, the structure of the Revelation as a whole is given. The central member is composed of a series of seven pairs of visions. It will be seen that 14:6-20, ‘The six angels’ is echoed in the structure by 16:1 to 18:24, ‘The seven vials’. This helps us to place the Harvest and the
Vintage, and to see that both will be fulfilled in the doom of Babylon and the Beast.

It is pardonable to hesitate in accepting the statement that the harvest here refers to judgment, seeing that in many passages the reaping of the harvest includes the righteous. One prophecy seems to speak directly of this same period. We refer to Joel 3:12-14:

'Let the heathen (nations) be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision (threshing): for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision (threshing)'.

The Authorized Version reads 'The valley of decision' here, but the Hebrew word charuts is translated 'threshing instrument' in Isaiah 28:27, 41:15, and Amos 1:3. Here without doubt is a scene of judgment, and here the figures both of harvest and vintage are used. Further, there is a verbal connection which should be remembered. In Revelation 14:15 the word 'thrust' is the Greek word pempo = to send. In Joel 3:13 the Septuagint has exapostello, which likewise means 'send' (see Joel 2:25). The sickle is sent, just as the other agencies of judgment and mercy, and just what will answer to the symbol we may not at present know. Another passage bearing upon the subject is Jeremiah 51:33:

'The daughter of Babylon is like a threshingfloor, it is time to thresh her: yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come'.

While judgment is manifestly the setting of these visions, the harvest at the end of the age is a reaping of both wheat and darnel. In this case the 'tares' or darnel (the 'children of the wicked one'), are the worshippers of the image. These are bound in bundles to be burned. The 'wheat' are the children of the Kingdom, the blessed dead who die in the Lord at that time. With regard to the vintage the language is plain. It represents unmitigated
wrath. The clusters of the vine of the earth are cast into the
great winepress of the wrath of God. This is but an echo of
the figure of verse 10, ‘the wine of the wrath of God’.
Isaiah 63:1-4 speaks of this terrible vintage:

‘Who is This That cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from
Bozrah? This That is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the
greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, Mighty to
save ... I have trodden the winepress alone ... I will tread them in
Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be
sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment. For
the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My
redeemed is come’ (Isa. 63:1-4).

When we were dealing with the earlier portion of
Revelation 14 we found Isaiah 34 applicable. That chapter
contains much that fits in with the vintage of Revelation
14. There we read of a ‘sacrifice in Bozrah’ (verse 6).
The same awful emphasis upon ‘blood’. ‘The land shall be
soaked (drunken) with blood’. And the same period is
indicated as that of Isaiah 63:

‘For it is the day of the LORD’S vengeance, and the year of
recompences for the controversy of Zion’ (Isa. 34:8).

Israel is represented as a vine. Sometimes they become
worse than the ‘vine of Sodom’ (Deut. 32:32), or ‘the
degenerate plant of a strange vine’ (Jer. 2:21), yet in the
day of their restoration they shall ‘grow as the vine’ (Hos.
14:7), and the vine that the Lord brought out of Egypt shall
once again blossom and bud, and fill the earth with fruit
(Psa. 80:8-19). The vine of Sodom, the degenerate plant of
a strange vine, to which Israel approximated in the
apostasy, was the vine of the earth. Sodom and Babylon
are included under this figure. The vine of the earth
becomes ripe, iniquity reaches its height. The Man of Sin
ascends the throne of Deity, and the sharp sickle is thrust
in and the vintage gathered. This vine has not yielded that
wine which rejoices the heart of God and man, but the
intoxicating wine of Babylon that has sent the nations
‘mad drunk’ (Jer. 51:7). Now the clusters are cast into the
winepress of the wrath of God, and the awful result is
expressed in the words:
'And blood came forth out of the winepress even to the bridles of the horses, a thousand six hundred furlongs' (Rev. 14:20 author's translation).

The sixth vial leads to Armageddon (16:12-16). The actual treading of the winepress takes place at the riding forth from heaven of Christ as the Word of God, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. As a result of the battle which then ensues, the birds that fly in mid-heaven are called to partake of the great supper of God, when they shall eat the flesh of kings, officers and mighty men, horse and rider (19:11-21).

The distance, 1,600 furlongs, cannot be spiritualized; it stands as an actual measurement and indicates some feature of importance. The furlong is the Roman stadium, which is about 202 English yards; 1,600 stadia, therefore, represent about 183 English miles. What tract of land can this point to? The southern extremity of Palestine was Kadesh-barnea (Num. 34), the northern boundary, Mount Hermon (see note in The Companion Bible to Num. 34:7). Kitto’s Cyclopaedia reads as follows:

'The length, from Mount Hermon in the north, to which the territory of Manasseh beyond Jordan extended (Josh. 13:11), to Kadesh-barnea in the south, to which the territory of Judah reached was 180 miles'.

The 1,600 furlongs give, practically, the extreme measurement north to south of the land of Israel. The whole of the land will be drenched with blood. Just how all will take place we do not know, and we are thankful that such details do not belong to our sphere. The cry goes up from beneath the altar:

'How long ... dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood?' (Rev. 6:10).

When the day of vengeance sets in, the second vial of wrath turns the sea into blood (16:3), the third vial turns the rivers and fountains into the same. The cry goes up at this:
‘They have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy’ (Rev. 16:6).

The woman, Babylon, is discovered ‘drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus’ (17:6), and in Babylon was found ‘the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth’ (18:24).

The nations by their policy, their social developments, their science and their religions, are heading straight for this awful end. The wrath of God is terrible beyond words. Blessed are they who have been redeemed from wrath and for whom there can be no condemnation.
CHAPTER 12
The Song of Moses, and the Seven Vials
Revelation 15 and 16

Chapter 14 is occupied with a brief foreshadowing of the seven vials of wrath and the condition of the Lord’s people during that dread period. It indicates that the climax sin is reached under the commands of the false prophet, and that the fall of Babylon is closely connected with the blasphemy associated with the beast. The torment of fire and brimstone and the smoke of that torment which ascends for the ages of the ages reveals the intensity of these seven last plagues, while the blessedness of the dead ‘from henceforth’ shows the frequency of martyrdom during this time. The whole is summarized under the figures of the harvest and the vintage.

Before this series is given we are permitted a glimpse of the FIRSTFRUITS (14:1-5), and these sing a NEW SONG. In chapter 15, before the seven vials are poured out, we see the overcomers of the beast, who also are a kind of FIRSTFRUITS from the harvest of the earth. These, instead of singing a new song, sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb. The key to the understanding of the seven vials of wrath is found in ‘the song of Moses’.

There is a division of opinion as to what is intended by the title, ‘The Song of Moses’. Some contend with a fair show of reason that the triumph over the host of Pharaoh in the Red Sea is echoed by the greater triumph over the beast and his image. This looks to Exodus 15 as the song of Moses. The Companion Bible and others, however, see a reference to Deuteronomy 32, which is distinctly and repeatedly called the ‘song’ of Moses, and which rehearses the ways of God with His people, vindicating the justice of His judgments, and revealing the inner causes both of Israel’s defection and the nation’s apostasy.

In Deuteronomy 31:19 we read, ‘That this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel’. In verse
21 we find, 'this song shall testify against them as a witness', and in verse 22 that Moses 'wrote this song the same day'. The burden of the song is given in verse 29, the evil which will befall them in the latter days. The song itself occupies the whole of Deuteronomy 32. It traverses the dealings of God with His people right to the end: the idolatry of Israel, the worshipping of strange gods, the forgetting of God, their resemblance to the vine of Sodom. The song concludes with a call to the nations to rejoice with His people, the threat of vengeance for the blood of His servants, and the promise of mercy to His land and people.

In Exodus 34:10, the Lord makes a covenant that before all the people He would do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation. This is primarily a covenant with reference to Israel as a stiff-necked people, but seems to cover the judgments of the Apocalypse. It is noticeable how closely the miraculous judgments of the Revelation resemble the plagues sent by God upon Pharaoh and Egypt. These we shall have an opportunity of observing later.

In Revelation 15:3 we read, 'And they sing the song of Moses ... and the song of the Lamb, saying ...'. This indicates that the overcomers do not repeat Deuteronomy 32, but give a summary of its principles in the words that follow. In their summary they emphasize at the commencement the greatness and the marvellous character of the works of God, and that His ways are just and true. Then they ask the question, 'Who should not fear, and glorify Thy name, O Lord?' and give a threefold reason:

Because of the Lord's holiness.
Because all nations shall come and worship.
Because of the manifestation of His righteous judgments.

In verse 3 the Authorized Version reads, 'Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints', and gives in the margin 'Or nations, or ages'. The R.V., G., L., T., Tr., A. and W.H. read 'nations'. The Numeric New Testament
reads, 'King of the ages'. This Numeric New Testament used the Greek text of Westcott and Hort, but has found it necessary to differ from them here. The two titles, 'King of nations' and 'King of the ages', occur together in a most significant passage in Jeremiah. In the tenth chapter of Jeremiah the prophet warns Israel against idolatry. After proving the utter futility of idolatry, the prophet says in verses 6 and 7:

'Forasmuch as there is none like unto Thee, O LORD; Thou art great, and Thy name is great in might. WHO WOULD NOT FEAR THEE, O KING OF NATIONS?' (Jer. 10:6,7).

Again the prophet interjects a word on the worthlessness of idolatry, and then in verse 10 says:

'But the LORD is the true God, He is the living God, and an everlasting King (KING OF THE AGES): at His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation' (Jer. 10:10).

Then follows a verse which is written in Chaldee, the language of Babylon:

'... the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish ... and from under these heavens' (Jer. 10:11).

Surely here is a reference to the state of things that necessitated the aionion gospel of Revelation 14.

The words, 'Who would not fear Thee, O King of nations?' are echoed in Revelation 15:3,4. The portion of Jeremiah addressed to Israel contains the title 'King of nations'. The title that immediately precedes the Chaldee verse is 'King of the ages'. Whichever reading we accept in Revelation 15, it appears from Jeremiah 10 that both titles are related, both speak of the Lord's purpose through the ages with regard to Israel and the nations and there, for the time being, our limited knowledge stays.

'O Lord ... Thou only art holy'. The word rendered 'holy' in Revelation 15:4 is not the usual word so translated. It is hosios. Cremer, linking it with the Hebrew chesed, speaks of it as denoting God's holy love toward His people Israel. Hosios denotes a holiness established by
right or custom, but *chesed* 'must not be taken as implying any praiseworthy virtue or merit, but simply an hereditary advantage' (Dr. Hermann Hupfeld). In Acts 13:34 the word occurs in the sentence 'I will give you the sure mercies of David', and the Authorized Version margin calls attention to the use of *ta hosia*, holy, or, just things, which the Septuagint frequently uses for the Hebrew *mercies*.

The occurrence of this word in Revelation 15:4 and 16:5 is closely associated with the fulfilment of the sure mercies of David and the restoration of Israel. The song of Moses and the song of the Lamb bring before us the truth, the righteousness, the mercy of Him Who is both King of nations and King of ages, Who in the midst of wrath remembers mercy, and, while judging the nations for their idolatry, yet speaks of the day when all the nations shall worship before Him.

We now approach the great crisis of the book. Chapters 16, 17 and 18 are taken up with the seven last plagues. These seven vials of wrath are, in the language of Jeremiah 51:11, 'The vengeance of His temple'.

This expression is found in the same context as the words, 'Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken'. Because these seven vials are peculiarly the 'vengeance of His temple', we find in Revelation 15:5 and 16:1, that the seven angels who are commissioned to pour them out are connected with the very innermost shrine of the tabernacle. 'The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony' is the basis of these judgments. They have to do with idolatry, with the usurpation of the place of God, with the blood of the saints.

The order of the seven vials is very similar to that observed of the seven seals and the seven trumpets. It will be remembered that the sixth seal takes us right on to the day of the wrath of the Lamb, and that the seventh seal is divided off from the rest by the half-hour's silence in
heaven, and that the seventh seal covers the whole period of the seven trumpets. So here: the first six vials run in sequence. The seventh is detached and is largely taken up with the judgment of Babylon. The order of the vials is as follows:

**The Vials**

1st. On the Earth.
2nd. On the Sea

_I heard._ The Angel of the Waters. _Thou art just_.

**One from the Altar.** _They are worthy._

4th. On the Sun Blasphemy.
5th. On the Throne


_I saw._ **The Demons.** **Armageddon.**

7th. On the Air. Voice from Temple: _It is done_.
Lightnings.
Thunders.
Voices.
Great Earthquake.
Great Babylon.
Great Hail.

There is a great similarity between these vials of wrath and the plagues of Egypt.

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<td>7th.</td>
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The exodus of Israel from Egypt is continually mentioned as a type of the greater day of their deliverance which is surely coming. In face of the literal character of the plagues of Egypt we cannot accept any spiritualizing in Revelation 16.

The 1st Vial.—When the Philistines took the ark, they were smitten with ‘emerods’. Israel was threatened with ‘the botch of Egypt’ (Deut. 28:27). Miriam and Uzziah were smitten with leprosy. Elymas was smitten with blindness. When the first vial is poured out on the earth, ‘a bad and evil ulcer’ broke out upon those who had the mark of the beast and whom worshipped his image.

The 2nd Vial.—Just as Moses caused the waters of Egypt to turn into blood, so the second angel pours his vial into the sea and it becomes as the blood of the dead, bringing death to every creature in it. Words cannot convey to the mind the horror of this judgment.

The 3rd Vial.—This touches the rivers and springs, and all drinking water becomes blood. However much the senses revolt at the awful character of these judgments, we must bear in mind the sins that have merited them. It is at this point that John says he heard the angel of the waters justifying the judgment of God:

‘Righteous art Thou, Who art, and Who wast, The Holy and Merciful One (ho hostios), because Thou didst judge these things; because they shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; worthy are they’ (Rev. 16:5, 6 author’s translation).

After this John heard ‘the altar’ saying, ‘Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments’. We are not told whether the angel of the altar, or the souls that waited beneath the altar, is intended in this intensely figurative expression. Most probably it indicates the concurrence of the martyrs, which is repeated in 19:1, 2.

Many translators render the words axioi eisi ‘they deserve it’, and while this is certainly the meaning, yet we feel that the contrast with the words axios ei of Revelation
5:9, 'Thou art worthy', is important. Further, *axios* is derived from a word meaning 'the beam of a balance', and amplifies the thought in the words that precede the exclamation, namely, 'Because they shed the blood of saints and prophets, Thou hast given them blood to drink' — the judgment corresponds with the crime; eye for eye, tooth for tooth, the beam of the balance indicating the equivalent judgment.

**The 4th Vial.** — The effect of this vial is the intensification of the heat of the sun:

'And men were scorched with the vehement heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, Who hath authority over these plagues; and they repented not to give Him glory' (Rev. 16:9 author's translation).

It is evident by the preceding words that these final judgments are so arranged (humanly speaking) to give the last opportunities to the worshippers of the beast to repent. Instead of repenting they blaspheme, both here, under the fifth, and under the seventh vial.

**The 5th Vial.** — A direct attack is made upon the throne of the beast. The throne of Satan will be at Pergamos (2:13), and Satan will give the beast his throne and great authority. Whether the seat of government will continue at Pergamos we cannot say. Revelation 2:13 seems to indicate that at least during one part of the time it will be there. Zechariah 5:11 suggests a return to Babylon.

The Day of the Lord is connected with 'darkness and gloominess, clouds, and thick darkness' (Joel 2). The sun will turn to darkness before the Day of the Lord (Mark 13:24,25). It is the beginning of the end.

**The 6th Vial.** — The Euphrates is dried up with a purpose — 'that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared'. In Isaiah 11:15,16, we read that 'the river' is to be smitten in the seven streams, so that men may go over dry shod:
And there shall be an highway for the remnant of His People which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was in Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt' (Isa. 11:16).

The passage through the Red Sea was real and the account of it literal, so will be the drying up of the river Euphrates. Both the remnant of Israel from Assyria, and the kings of the east will pass over in this way. Zechariah 10:10,11, has words much to the same effect as Isaiah 11:15,16. The kings of the east evidently lead their armies across the Euphrates, and the verses following show that their objective is Armageddon.

Three unclean spirits, demon spirits working miracles, proceed from the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, with the express object of gathering the kings of the habitable world to the battle of that great day of God, the Almighty. East and West (for the oikoumene signifies the 'habitable' or 'civilized' world) meet together in joint opposition to the Lamb. At this critical period the Lord speaks to His own enjoining watchfulness. The 'blessedness' of watchfulness here, is to be compared and contrasted with the 'blessedness' of a martyr's death 'from henceforth' in chapter 14.

Armageddon, or more correctly, Har-Magedon, means 'The mount of Megiddo'. This is a literal geographical place, situated in the plain of Esdraelon, and destined to be the greatest battlefield of all time. Judges 5:19, 2 Kings 23:29, 2 Chronicles 35:22-25, Zechariah 12:11, and Septuagint version of Isaiah 10:28, give a foreshadowing of the Har-Magedon of the Apocalypse.

The seventh angel will pour his vial on the air. Why the air? We are not told that men were suffocated as a result — indeed, no result is actually mentioned. Yet the outpouring of this vial, reserved to the end, must be the climax. The fifth vial will be poured out upon the throne of the beast, the seventh will be directed against Satan
himself. Unless we mistake the reference, Ephesians 2 speaks of Satan as: ‘The prince of the authority of the air’. The casting out of the dragon, called the Devil and Satan, from the heavens to the earth is followed by the words:

‘Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ (Anointed)’ (Rev. 12:10).

The casting down of the Devil speaks woe to the inhabitants of the earth:

‘Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time’ (Rev. 12:12).

When therefore the seventh vial falls upon the air, a great voice is heard out of the temple from the throne saying ‘ACCOMPLISHED’ (Rev. 16:17). The word here ranks in sacred importance with the word ‘FINISHED’ of John 19:30. The state of the text renders Revelation 21:6 (‘It is done’) a little uncertain, but many feel that the Authorized Version should be retained. If so, this is a blessed counterpart to Revelation 16:17. One of the features that follows this vial is an unprecedented earthquake:

‘Such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great’ (Rev. 16:18).

Seeing that this earthquake must be akin to the mighty geological upheavals that have left their mark upon the crust of the earth, when mountains were formed and islands rose or disappeared, the words of verse 20 need not be figuratively understood at all; ‘Every island fled away, and (certain) mountains disappeared’. The shock divided Babylon into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed.

The mighty army that comes up against Israel, which Ezekiel addresses as Gog (38:14-23), is met by a terrible earthquake:
'So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at My presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground ... I will plead against (with) him with pestilence and with blood ... great hailstones, fire, and brimstone' (Ezek. 38:20-22).

The passage seems to refer to the seventh vial. In Isaiah 2:19,21 in connection with the Day of the Lord, we read of the time 'when He shall shake terribly the earth'. Haggai 2:6,7,21 and 22 says:

'Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come' (Hag. 2:6,7).

'I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen (nations); and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and the riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother' (Hag. 2:21,22).

This again speaks plainly of Har-Magedon. The first earthquake in the experience of man is described as a 'creation', being something new. It was occasioned by the presumption of Korah, and Moses said:

'But if the LORD make a new thing (margin, create a creature), and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up ... then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD' (Num. 16:30).

The earthquake is associated with the judgment of God upon those who sinned in connection with holy things. Deuteronomy 32:21,22, declares that the idolatry of Israel kindled a fire which shall consume the earth and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. Thus the volcano and the earthquake are both associated with 'the vengeance of His Temple'. The earthquake that Zechariah tells us shall split the mount of Olives in the midst is likened to the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, the king, who followed Korah's sinful example, and was smitten (like the men under the first vial) with leprosy. Not only is the earth convulsed, but there fall from heaven hailstones of almost incredible weight. The Jewish talent has been computed as
equal to 114 lb. troy (Moses Stuart), avoirdupois (The Companion Bible), the Attic talent 57 lb. troy. Whichever we take the talent to mean, the judgment is beyond thought. The construction of the sentence and the words used in verse 21 justify some such rendering as ‘terrific!’

Some readers have passed through the mental and physical agonies of the bombardment of modern war in the trenches, or the terrors of an air raid at home. What therefore must this unparalleled earthquake be, followed by a storm of hail, each stone weighing at least about a half hundredweight (about 25 kilos), falling from heaven! By far the most important feature of this section is that of verse 19, ‘And great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath’. This feature occupies chapters 17 and 18, and to this we must address ourselves in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 13

Babylon the Great

Revelation 17 and 18

On two occasions during the outpouring of woe and judgment, Babylon has come into notice. First after the announcement of the aionion gospel by an angel, ‘There followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city’, and the reason of Babylon’s fall follows: ‘Because she made all nations drunk with the wine of her fornication’. At the close of the seventh vial there comes another reference to Babylon, ‘And great Babylon came into remembrance before God’. This time instead of speaking of the wine which Babylon made the nations to drink, a parallel judgment is indicated, ‘To give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath’.

So important a place does the fall of Babylon occupy in the Revelation that chapters 17 and 18 are devoted to it, and the opening verses of 19, contain Hallelujahs over the destruction of the city. The overthrow of Babylon is introduced by a vision of a woman. Then follows the explanation of the symbol. These two phases occupy chapter 17. One of the seven angels that had the seven vials addressed John, saying:

‘Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication’ (Rev. 17:1,2).

The apostle was thereupon carried away ‘in the spirit into the wilderness’, an expression very similar to that of 1:10, ‘I was in spirit in the Day of the Lord’. The vision that he saw is next described:

‘I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns’ (Rev. 17:3).

There are further descriptions of the beast. The description of the woman follows:
‘And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication’ (Rev. 17:4).

The symbolic significance of this vision is next indicated. In the Authorized Version the whole wording is printed in capitals, as though all formed a part of the title upon the woman’s forehead. The Revised Version margin, however, gives it as though the word ‘mystery’ is an explanation, but not a part of the title. We read the verse then as follows:

‘And upon her forehead a name written, a mystery, BABYLON THE GREAT, the mother of the harlots and of the abominations of the earth’ (Rev. 17:5 R.V. margin).

This passage is threefold:

1. There is here a ‘mystery’.
2. There is the name itself, ‘Babylon the Great’.
3. There is the meaning of the mystery of the name, ‘The mother, etc.’.

In chapter 1:20 we have a guide to the interpretation of the mysteries suggested:

‘The mystery of the seven stars ... in My right hand ... The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches’ (Rev. 1:20).

The name therefore ‘Babylon the Great’ was a secret symbol of something deeper. If however we are in ignorance or confusion as to the basis of this symbol, we shall not be ready to follow the inspired interpretation, and for the sake of clearness we must set before the reader the Scriptural history and prophecy concerning Babylon before we go further into the intricate details of chapter 17.

Babylon, as the seat of government from which commenced ‘the times of the Gentiles’, is that great city which existed in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, but Babylon, the mother of harlots, is that city founded by Nimrod the rebel. Idolatry when traced to its source dips finally underground, and is found originating in the secret rites and teachings of ancient Babel, and idolatry with
its associated obscenities is the dark and persecuting background of the whole book of the Revelation. The ancient mystery cults were all derived from Babel.

Christian Karl Josias Bunsen (1791-1860) says that the religious system of Egypt itself, ancient as it is, was derived from Asia and 'the primitive empire in Babel'. It is not our purpose to attempt to set forth the ramifications of the Babylonian system, the reader will find it most fully set forth in Hislop’s *Two Babylons*. There is practically no religious system on earth today that does not use the symbols, names and ritual of this leavening set of lies. What Jerusalem is yet to be in the hands of our God for blessing, Babylon has been and yet will be, in the hands of Satan, for a curse.

There are many expositors who believe and teach that the Babylon of the Revelation is the Roman Catholic Church. This we must set aside as not fulfilling the Scriptures. Isaiah wrote prophetically of Babylon. Did he speak of the Roman apostasy or of the city of Babylon? Let him speak for himself:

‘And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the CHALDEES’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah’ (Isa. 13:19).

The whole of Isaiah 13 should be read, and its many parallels with Revelation noted. Its time period is spoken of as 'the Day of the LORD' (verse 9). Its signs are the darkening of the sun, moon and stars (verse 10). Its object is the punishing of the wicked and the proud (verse 11). Its accompaniments are the shaking of the heavens and the removing of the earth (verse 13). These four points of resemblance are enough to connect the Babylon of Isaiah’s burden with that of John in the Revelation.

When we read on into Isaiah 14 and hear the proverb taken up against the ‘King of Babylon’, we again realize that prophecy is pointing onward to the great apostate head of World Rule who is to seek universal worship for himself, saying 'I will be like the most High' (Isa. 14:4-23
This Prophecy

and Rev. 13). Jeremiah prophesies concerning Babylon, and he too is careful to locate Babylon geographically:

‘The word that the LORD spake against Babylon and against the land of the CHALDEANS’ (Jer. 50:1).

One incident that marks the overthrow of Babylon is the return of both Israel and Judah:

‘In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together ... let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant’ (Jer. 50:4,5).

This fixes the time of fulfilment as being yet future. The nation concerning whom Jeremiah prophesies is called ‘the hindermost (or the last) of the nations’ (Jer. 50:12), which is the position of Babylon at the time of the Lord’s return. The reader is urged to read Jeremiah 50 and 51 for himself and note the many points of contact with Revelation. To stimulate the reader to make the comparison we transcribe the following list of parallels from a list in the prophetic studies of B. W. Newton:

| Jer. 51:13 | Rev. 17:1 |
| Jer. 51:7  | Rev. 17:4 |
| Jer. 51:7  | Rev. 17:2 |
| Isa. 47:5,7 | Rev. 17:18 and 18:7,8 |
| Jer. 51:25 | Rev. 18:8 |
| Jer. 51:6,45; 50:8 | Rev. 18:4 |
| Jer. 51:9  | Rev. 18:5 |
| Jer. 51:15; 51:24-49 | Rev. 18:6 |
| Jer. 50:29 | Rev. 18:6 |
| Jer. 51:8 (Isa. 21:9) | Rev. 18:2 |
| Jer. 51:63,64 | Rev. 18:21 |
| Isa. 13:21 | Rev. 18:2 |
| Isa. 24:8,10 | Rev. 18:23 |

When John saw the vision of the woman sitting upon the beast he said:

‘And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration (wonder)’ (Rev. 17:6).

The question that arises sooner or later in this connection is ‘will Babylon be rebuilt?’ Zechariah, the prophet of Israel’s restoration, foretells the revival of
Babylon. In Zechariah 5:1-11 we have a woman, and wickedness taken back in an ephah 'to build it an house in the LAND OF SHINAR'. This prophecy necessitates the revival of Babylon. Babylon has never been destroyed as Scripture says it will be — 'suddenly' (Jer. 51:8). When the stone cut out without hands struck the Colossus on the feet, the whole image, the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces, together, and the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Gentile dominion and Satanic counterfeit will both be headed up again in Babylon, and there they will be judged. Mesopotamia cannot be kept out of the world's politics any more than Jerusalem could be kept out of the first great war or present problems. The sands of time are running out. The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and whether on the mount of Olives, in the air, or in glory, may we be ready to meet Him.

Upon the expression of wonder with which John greeted the vision of the woman and the scarlet coloured beast the angel said to him:

'Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns' (Rev. 17:7).

This is encouraging, for the mystery is great. At first sight the explanation seems more difficult to grasp than the vision itself. The order in which the interpretation is given is (1) the beast, (2) the woman. So far as the beast itself is concerned, its supernatural character is first put forward in verse 8. Then the meaning of the seven heads and the ten horns follows (verses 9-14). The waters upon which the woman sits are interpreted in verse 15, and then finally the woman is explained in verse 18. This covers all in the vision that needs explanation:

'The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition' (17:8).

These few words sketch the past, present and future of the beast.
(1) He was.—He has therefore lived in the past.

(2) He is not.—That is to say, when the time comes into which John had been taken by the spirit, the beast will have been slain. Revelation 13 adds information here. There the beast rises up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads. One of the beast's heads had been slain as it were to death, and yet was healed, and all the world wondered after the beast.

(3) He shall be present.—He is about to ascend out of the abyss, and to go into perdition. The Authorized Version reads 'and yet is', but all the best MSS. read kai parestai = 'shall be present' for kaiper estin = 'and yet is'.

There is in this statement an indication that the beast will counterfeit the parousia of the Lord. In 2 Thessalonians 2:8,9 we read:

'Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His parousia: even him, whose parousia is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders'.

One of the Divine Titles in this book is the unfolded name Jehovah — ‘Him which is, and which was, and which is to come’. The counterfeit of this name is seen in the description of the beast — ‘He was, and is not, and shall be present’. There is also a very evident imitation of the glorious words of Revelation 1:18, ‘I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive unto the ages of the ages’.

The ascension of the beast from the abyss after it could be said of him ‘he is not’ indicates that we are here dealing with something superhuman. In some form or other this is life from the dead. Just how far Satan has the power of giving back life we do not pretend to know, and how much is real and how much is deception we cannot say. The statements of Scripture plainly intimate the miraculous, and 2 Thessalonians 2, already quoted, uses the same words ‘power, signs, wonders’ as are used in Hebrews 2:4,
with the added qualification 'lying'. In Revelation 17:8 we read:

'And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation (overthrow) of the world'.

In Revelation 13, after describing the superhuman phase of this beast, verse 8 says:

'And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written (have not been written) in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation (overthrow) of the world' (Rev. 13:8).

Before the angel proceeds to give further detail, he adds the words, 'Here is the mind which hath wisdom' (17:9). This is a close correspondence with the closing verse of chapter 13, 'Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast'. There is evidently some close association between the number of the beast, 666, or his mark, and the threefold description 'He who was, and is not, and shall be present'. It seems very probable that his mark, which all his followers will have to wear, will be some device that will set forth this great Satanic counterfeit of the resurrection. Practically all of the peculiar and sacred prerogatives of the Saviour have been appropriated by false leaders and systems, but it remains for the superhuman beast at the end to travesty His Name, 'the One who was, and is, and is to come', His resurrection and His parousia.

We must not omit another most important reference. In Revelation 12 we have the great sign of the woman and the birth of the man child, and there we have a description of Satan — 'a great red dragon having SEVEN HEADS and TEN HORNS'. There is war in heaven and Satan is cast out into the earth. Satan DESCENDS (12:12, katabaino), and the beast ASCENDS (13:1, anabaino).

Both words are used of Christ. The wild beast that ascends from the sea is described in exactly the same terms as was the great red dragon, 'having TEN HORNS and SEVEN
HEADS. One important difference is made, which we must remember as we proceed, and that is, the dragon has ‘on his heads seven crowns’, whereas the beast has ‘on his horns ten crowns and on his heads names of blasphemy’.

The prophet Daniel saw this same monster in vision, and describes it in Daniel 7. Four beasts came up from the sea, the first like a LION, the second like a BEAR, the third like a LEOPARD having four heads, and a fourth beast not likened to anything, and this beast had ten horns. Here again we have the seven heads and ten horns. The lion = one head; the bear = one head; the leopard = four heads; and the fourth beast = one head. Total, seven heads. Returning to Revelation 13:2, we find Daniel 7 is immediately before us:

‘And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion’ (Rev. 13:2).

In Daniel 7:14 we see the Ancient of Days sitting and the Son of man brought near Him, and

‘There was given Him dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him’ (Dan. 7:14).

In Revelation 13:2-7 we read of this beast:

‘And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat (throne), and great authority ... and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations’.

One thing seems clear amidst all the complicated imagery and wording, namely, that the last kingdom which shall be upon earth before the coming of Christ shall be ‘diverse from all kingdoms’ (Dan. 7), for it shall be the kingdom of Satan on earth, the beast being possessed of all Satan’s authority and power, so that when men ‘wonder after the beast’ they ‘worship the dragon’. Just as there is yet to be a kingdom on the earth which is also to be diverse from all kingdoms, namely, the kingdom of God, so shall there be the kingdom of the Lion-Lamb, and when the world wonders after that kingdom of blessedness and shall see Him Who really died and rose again, they shall in their
turn worship Him that sitteth upon the throne and also the Lamb. The beast that supports Babylon is Satanic in its fullest degree.

To this fearful end the Gentile world is moving. To this awful blasphemy apostate Israel too will incline, and make their covenant with hell and with death. Antichrist will be to the Jew what the beast will be to the Gentile, an outward manifestation of Satan's final usurpation of the throne of God just before the end. What a blessed thing to be saved out of all this wickedness and horror. Yet science and politics and religion will have so completely blinded the eyes of men that they will believe that the rising of the seven-headed monster from the abyss will be the millennial dawn, whereas it will be the settling down of such blackness of darkness that none but God can disperse.

A further description of the seven heads and the ten horns is given by the angel in Revelation 17 to that which is given in chapters 12 and 13. We must remember that the explanation which starts in Revelation 17:9 reads straight on and should be translated thus:

'The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth, and they are seven kings' (Rev. 17:9,10 author's translation).

We may not be quite clear why there is this double interpretation here, but it is clear enough for us to understand that the seven heads represent seven kings. Possibly the introduction of the symbol of mountains is connected with the fact that the woman represents a city. The transition would be then:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Woman.</th>
<th>The Seven-headed Beast.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The woman is a city.</td>
<td>The heads are mountains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The city reigns.</td>
<td>The mountains are kings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The seven kings are further described:

'Five are fallen' (the word indicates a violent death).
'The one is' (that is at the time of the vision).
'The other is not yet come'.
The order therefore is:

(1) 5 kings already fallen.
(2) These are specified or symbolized in Daniel 2.
(3) The sixth king reigning at this point of the vision.
(4) The seventh king not yet come.

When the seventh king ascends the throne ‘He must continue a short space’. We are not here told how the seventh king comes to his end, but in chapter 13 we find that one of the heads of the beast was wounded to death and the deadly wound was healed.

‘The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition’ (Rev. 17:11).

In verse 8 we read:

‘The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit (abyss), and go into perdition’ (Rev. 17:8).

The ascending out of the abyss is parallel with the statement that he is the eighth and of the seven. The eighth therefore is the superhuman stage after the deadly wound had been healed. This eighth King does not add another head to the beast, for ‘he is of the seven’. Not merely ‘of the seventh’ although that is true, the resuscitated king is ‘of the seven’ and contains within himself the previous seven heads, so that this eighth king is spoken of not as a king merely, but as ‘the beast’. He is first mentioned in 11:7, where, speaking of the two witnesses, it says:

‘And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit (abyss) shall make war against them’ (Rev. 11:7).

These witnesses occupy a period of three and a half years before their death (11:3). The holy city is trodden under foot of the Gentiles for the same period (11:2). In chapter 13 the beast receives power to continue three and a half years. This period seems to be the extent of the reign
of the beast, for the seventh angel sounds soon after the
death of the two witnesses.

The satanic kingdom has seven crowned heads (12:3),
but the final manifestation in the beast that ascends out of
the abyss has ten crowned horns (13:1). We are not
definitely told that the seven heads were not crowned, and
seeing that they represented reigning kings, we must
understand the ten crowns to be additional. This is in line
with the angel's explanation:

'And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have
received no kingdom as yet; but receive authority as kings one hour
with the beast' (Rev. 17:12).

In Daniel 7:24 the description is 'And the ten horns out
of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise'. The ten
kings arise out of the fourth kingdom which was diverse
from the others. They are not human, they are of
Satan's princes and are spiritual. This observation is most
important. One feels their presence even in Daniel 2. The
descriptions of the earlier kingdoms of Gentile dominion
read smoothly enough, but when the toes of the image are
described the language becomes involved:

'And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so
the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken (brittle). And
whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, THEY shall mingle
themselves with the seed of MEN: but they shall not cleave one to
another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of
THESE KINGS shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom', etc. (Dan.
2:42-44).

Who are meant by 'they'? If they are ordinary human
beings, why speak of them mingling themselves with the
seed of 'men'? These kings' are evidently 'they' and
'they' are the toes. The toes are 'ten' in number, and
although this final phase of the Colossus was not a subject
for Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel says enough to let us
understand that Gentile dominion will finally merge itself
into a confederacy of ten kings who shall be superhuman,
and that although they will attempt to mingle with the seed
of men they shall not do so. It was left for Daniel himself
to see the vision of this monstrous kingdom and the ten kings that arose out of it. Some readers may be a little sceptical as to the possibility of these more than human kings, and therefore we might notice Daniel 10. A glorious heavenly being appears to Daniel. The description of his glory is so like that of Christ in Revelation 1, that some have felt that it must be the same. The effect upon Daniel was overpowering. This mighty messenger reveals to Daniel the fact that 'the Prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood him one and twenty days' (10:13) and it necessitated the help of Michael the archangel before he could get through to Daniel! Not only is there this mighty Prince of Persia, but, says the messenger, 'the Prince of Grecia shall come' (10:20). These princes cannot be merely human, for no human being could withstand for one and twenty days such a glorious person as appeared to Daniel. Ten such kings form part of the beast at the time of the end. They had no kingdom until the beast ascends out of the abyss, then they reign together with him. How closely Satan travesties truth.

When the true King reigns, there will be associated with Him those who also received a deadly wound and had been healed:

'I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years' (Rev. 20:4).

Of these ten kings it is written, Revelation 17:13, 'These have one mind (purpose, gnome)'. Gnome occurs twice in verse 17:

'For God inclined their hearts to carry out His purpose (gnome), even to carry out one purpose (gnome) and to give their kingdom to the beast till the words of God shall be fulfilled' (Rev. 17:17 author's translation).

What a comforting thought in this awful nightmare, that even Satan's princes are beneath the control of God! Seeking in this final desperate throw to accomplish the
purpose of their fallen master, they nevertheless can do nothing against the truth.

'These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful' (17:14).

This war is described more fully in chapter 19. Before that takes place, however, another part of the divine purpose must be fulfilled. Babylon, the great city, rules over peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues (17:15), and the kings of the earth (not the ten kings) are in league with her. When the moment arrives the ten kings and the beast throw over the attitude of support hitherto given to Babylon and make her desolate. Thus Babylon, that wicked city, with its long history of infamy, finds in the final phase of its anti-christian activity its own executioner.

The whole of the eighteenth chapter is devoted to the record of the destruction of Babylon. The fall of Babylon has been spoken of in earlier chapters, but the actual narrative is reserved until the last because it is the great tragic climax of the history of man on earth. When Babylon falls, the end has come, and the long-prayed-for kingdom of righteousness dawns.

'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird' (Rev. 18:2 author's translation).

There is a fulfilment here of the prophecy of Isaiah 13:21,22:

'Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces'.

Jeremiah says of Babylon:

'It is a land of graven images, and they are mad upon the idols. Therefore the wild beasts ... the owls shall dwell therein' (50:38,39).
'And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwellingplace for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant' (51:37).

Isaiah and Jeremiah both speak of dragons; Revelation speaks of demons and unclean spirits. In Revelation 9:14 we learn that at the river Euphrates were bound four angels, and upon their being loosed a demon army of two hundred thousand thousand was let loose also. Babylon is to be the prison house (phulake) of every unclean spirit and the habitation of demons. The time for judgment does not come immediately at the destruction of Babylon, and here at this spot will be gathered and held all the unclean spirits and demons that have worked such mischief and ruin among men, while the thousand-year reign of Christ shall run its course. Behind the idols of the Gentiles were the demons, so taught the apostle Paul:

'The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils (demons), and not to God' (1 Cor. 10:20).

The fall of Babylon and its fate just described is because of its effect upon all the nations of the earth. There appears to be need for a revision of the text of Revelation 18:3. Instead of reading as the Authorized Version, 'For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication', we read 'Because all nations have fallen by reason of the wine of the fury of her fornication'. Compare:

'The nations have drunken her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed' (Jer. 51:7,8).

As Babylon has caused the ruin of all the nations of the earth, so Babylon shall fall as a consequence. As Babylonianism has robbed the nations of their wits and their morals as strong wine will, so let her cup be filled double. Let her become the prison-house of these demon and unclean spirit agencies of destruction. That there is this element of retribution intended Revelation 18:6,7 will show:
'Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously (indulged), so much torment and sorrow give her'.

A call goes forth at this point to the people of God:

'Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues' (Rev. 18:4).

'My people'.—When Nebuchadnezzar became the head of gold, Israel became La-Ammi, 'Not My people'. At the return from Babylon they came into favour again, but this position was again lost in A.D. 70 at the destruction of the temple. When that great Babylonian dominion falls, the moment will have arrived for Israel once more to become 'My people'. These 'people' who are called upon to 'come out' are hidden in Jeremiah to 'remember the LORD afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind' (Jer. 51:50). At the fall of Babylon Israel repent:

'In those days, and at that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward' (Jer. 50:4,5).

The fall of Babylon is to be sudden:

'Therefore shall her plagues come in one day' (Rev. 18:8).

'In one hour is thy judgment come' (Rev. 18:10).

'These two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day ... desolation shall come upon thee suddenly' (Isa. 47:9,11).

Babylon is to be utterly burned by fire (Rev. 18:8). Jeremiah 51:25 says that Babylon shall become 'a burnt mountain'. The destruction of Babylon will cause universal woe:

'The kings of the earth ... shall bewail her ... and the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her' (Rev. 18:9,11).

'At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations' (Jer. 50:46).

These features when taken together prove that this fall of Babylon is future, and therefore that Babylon must
revive and once more take a prominent place in the earth. For the sake of clearness let us summarize these points:

(1) The return and repentance of Israel and Judah together.
(2) The terrific suddenness of the blow.
(3) The destruction by fire.
(4) The worldwide consternation at her fall.

These features have never yet been fulfilled. Babylon slowly dwindled away. Arabs do pitch their tents there. There was a church there in apostolic times (1 Peter 5:13), and before the war of 1914-1918 a Turkish governor found enough people there to pay taxes to the Sultan’s government. An indication of the character of Babylon is found in the list of things which made up the merchandise whereby the merchants of the earth grew rich:

‘Gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and thyine (citron) wood, and all manner of vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of most precious (costly) wood, and of brass (copper), and iron, and marble, and cinnamon (spice), and odours (incense), and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle (beast), and sheep, and horses, and chariots (carriages), and slaves (bodies), and souls of men’ (Rev. 18:12,13).

It will be observed that while gold and silver are included, iron as a raw material is not wanted. Vessels of iron already made are included. The timber too is costly and beautiful (not the timber of commerce); spices, incense and unguents (ointments) speak of luxury and ritual, and lastly the merchandise includes the ‘bodies and souls of men’. The papyri use the word ‘body’ as a synonym for a ‘slave’; here the slavery is so deep that it includes both body and soul. The traffic in these articles with Babylon was so great that the merchants of the earth grew rich in their trade — ‘the abundance of her luxury’ (verse 3). Babylon is not a commercial city. She imports luxuries, but does not export in exchange. It will be observed that shipmasters and mariners are included. Herodotus is referred to by Rawlinson as saying that the Euphrates was navigable 500 miles from its mouth. Not only do the kings
of the earth, the merchants and shipowners raise a cry at
the fall of Babylon, but the call goes forth:

'Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and
ye prophets, seeing that God hath avenged you on her' (Rev. 18:20
author's translation).

This rejoicing is recorded in the opening verses of
chapter 19. Then comes the great symbol of utter
destruction with the wonderful accompaniment of the
prophetic dirge (lament for the dead):

'A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it
into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city
Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found NO MORE AT ALL'
(Rev. 18:21).
'Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will
bring upon her' (Jer. 51:64).

Music and mirth, craftsmanship and domestic work, the
lamp and light of hearth and home, the voice of bride and
bridegroom shall be known in Babylon NO MORE AT ALL.
We do not know how words could be used to express more
thoroughly and irrevocably the destruction that falls upon
Babylon the great. Finally:

'... by thy (her) sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her
was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were
slain upon the earth' (Rev. 18:23,24).

Such is the twofold indictment, deceiver and destroyer.
With the judgment of Babylon is introduced the first of a
blessed series of 'no more's', which expand and include
the sea, sorrow, sin, death, and the curse.

Before entering into the teaching of chapter 19, we give
a summary of the teaching of Scripture on the question, Is
the fall of Babylon future?

Is the Babylon of prophecy to be understood literally?

There are two main prophecies, Isaiah 13,14 and
Jeremiah 50,51. Let us observe the way in which Babylon
is there described. Isaiah 13:19 speaks of Babylon as 'The
beauty of the Chaldees' excellency', and it is situated
where it is a likely thing for Arabs to pitch their tents (verse 20). Jeremiah 50 opens with the words, 'The word that the LORD spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans'. The connection between Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans is seen again in Jeremiah chapter 50, verses 8, 10, 25, 35, 45; and in chapter 51, verses 4, 24, 35, 54. Not only so, but the symbol of Babylon’s fall is connected with the river Euphrates (Jer. 51:63). We do not think words could be plainer.

Supposing we agree that the Babylon of Isaiah and Jeremiah is literal, how does that prove that the Babylon of Revelation 17 and 18 is literal too?

Let us 'search and see'.

**Jer. 51:13**

'O thou that dwellest upon many waters ... thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness'.

**Rev. 17:1**

'Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters'.

**Jer. 51:7**

'Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD’s hand, that made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad'.

**Rev. 17:4 and 2**

'Having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations'.

'The inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication'.

**Isa. 47:5, 8, 9**

'O daughter of the Chaldeans ... the lady of kingdoms'.

'Thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever ... Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children; but these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood'.

**Rev. 17:18; 18:7, 8**

'The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth'.

'How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she hath said in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine'.
Babylon the Great

Jer. 51:25  Rev. 18:8
'I ... will make thee a burnt mountain'  'She shall be utterly burned with fire'.

Jer. 51:45  Rev. 18:4
'My people, go ye out of the midst of her'.  'Come out of her, My people'.

Jer. 50:15  Rev. 18:6
'As she hath done, do unto her'.  'Reward her even as she rewarded you'.

Jer. 51:63,64  Rev. 18:21
'And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her'.  'And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all'.

We believe the parallels are too evident to need further remark.

May not the fall of Babylon have taken place already?

We will answer this question by noting:

(a) Marks of Time.

'Then shall his yoke depart from off them (Israel)' (Isa. 14:25).

'Her time (that is Babylon's time) is near to come ... for the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land ... and they shall rule over their oppressors' (Isa. 13:22; 14:1,2).

'In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God ... join ourselves to the LORD in (by) a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten' (Jer. 50:4,5).

'In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none' (Jer. 50:20).

The fall of Babylon synchronizes with the restoration of Israel and Judah. It must therefore be future. Further, the
Scriptures already considered declare that this blow shall fall in the *Day of the Lord*:

‘Howl ye; for the Day of the L ORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty ... and Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah’ (Isa. 13:6-19).

(b) Other signs.

The fall of Babylon is placed in a setting of worldwide judgment:

‘I will punish the WORLD for their evil’ (Isa. 13:11).

The fall of Babylon is accompanied by signs in the heavens:

‘The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth and the moon shall not cause her light to shine ... therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of Hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger’ (Isa. 13:10 and 13).

This is dated for us in Matthew 24 as being ‘immediately after the tribulation of those days’, and is closely connected with the Lord’s *parousia*.

The fall of Babylon is to be sudden:

‘Babylon is *suddenly* fallen and destroyed: howl for her’ (Jer. 51:8).

‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come’ (Rev. 18:10).

The gradual decline of Babylon in no sense corresponds with this emphasis upon its sudden end. In the days of Alexander the Great, Babylon was a city strong enough to have attempted resistance against him. It did not do so, but welcomed the conqueror, who commanded the rebuilding of its temples. Babylon therefore was not suddenly destroyed when the Medes took the kingdom. In the time of Tiberius, Strabo speaks of Babylon as being ‘to a great degree deserted’. Peter wrote his epistle from Babylon, where a church had been formed. In A.D. 460 a writer says
that Babylon was only inhabited by some Jews, and from Babylon soon after this was produced the Babylonian Talmud. In A.D. 917 Ibn. Hankal speaks of Babylon as 'a small village'. In A.D. 1100 a fortified town is mentioned named Hillah (from Arabic to rest, to take up abode). In A.D. 1811 Hillah was visited by Rich, who found a population of between six and seven thousand Arabs and Jews. The land which supports even this number of people cannot be called 'desolate, so that no man shall dwell therein' (Jer. 50:3). If Hillah has been built out of the stones that composed the greater buildings of Babylon, then the words of Jeremiah 51:26 have never yet been fulfilled: 'They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations, but thou shalt be desolate for ever'.

No useful purpose will be served by lengthening these evidences. We believe that the testimony of Scripture is clear and unambiguous: that Babylon, in the land of the Chaldeans, on the Euphrates, will be revived to accord with the description of Isaiah 13, Jeremiah 50 and 51 and Revelation 17 and 18: that in the Day of the Lord, and accompanied by signs in the heavenly bodies, Babylon will be suddenly destroyed and become like Sodom and Gomorrah. Throughout the thousand-year reign of Christ, Babylon will remain a witness to all the world, a prison-house of every unclean spirit, a place shunned and abhorred by all men. In direct contrast with this will be the glory of restored Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

We look upon Rome and Romanism as one of many corrupt streams that flow from Babylon, but do not believe that this most corrupt daughter can be called the mother of all the abominations of the earth. The issues are vaster and deeper than can be contained within the history of the professing church, and we believe that the united testimony of Scripture demands a future rebuilt Babylon followed by utter destruction at the Coming of the Lord.
CHAPTER 14

The Marriage of the Lamb and the Revelation

Revelation 19

‘Alas! Alas!’ cried the merchants of the earth, ‘Hallelujah!’ cried heaven, when great Babylon fell. The heavenly cry is made by:

A Much people in heaven.
B Four and twenty elders.
B Four living ones.
A A great multitude.

The cry of ‘much people in heaven’ is followed by the reference to the ‘great whore, which did corrupt the earth’. The cry of the ‘great multitude’ is followed by the reference to the wife of the Lamb. Babylon and Israel, the false and the true, start together in Genesis 11 and 12. For a time the false is in the ascendancy, but at the end, judgment is swift and without remedy, and the true rises out of the dust.

The first ascription of praise in the Revelation arises from the redeemed company who have been made a kingdom of priests. We have a parallel in Isaiah. First, in Isaiah 53 they look upon Him Whom they pierced and mourn for Him, then Isaiah 54 opens with the word ‘Sing’. This time it is not as a kingdom of priests, but as a restored wife that the nation is addressed:

‘Thou ... shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thy husband ... for the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God’ (Isa. 54:4-6).

The day of Israel’s return to the Lord is likened to the day when they came up out of Egypt, which likeness is often referred to when speaking of the end. So Hosea 2:15-20 says:
She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call Me Ishi ("My husband") ... and I will betroth thee unto Me for ever (the age); yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness.

This wife who had been repudiated (Hos. 2:2) is said to be 'betrothed' upon her return, so Isaiah 62:5 uses the figure:

'As a young man marrieth a virgin ... and as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee'.

This is followed in Isaiah 63 with the prophecy of the coming of the Lord in vengeance, 'their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments', being parallel with the passage in Revelation 19, 'He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood'; the 'garments like him that treadeth the wine fat' being parallel with 'He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God' (Rev. 19:15).

The close association which is made by Isaiah 62 and 63 between the marriage of Israel and the treading of the winepress of the wrath of God enables us to see with the same sequence in Revelation 19 that we have there the fulfilment of these earlier prophecies of restoration. For a thousand years the marriage, here celebrated, shall last. Whether it be true to say that it is then done away, and that the Holy City which descends out of heaven called 'The Bride' is something quite different, we will consider in its place. Of the Lamb's wife it is said that she had 'made herself ready'; in chapter 21 the word appears again in the expression, 'prepared as a bride adorned for her husband'.

While it is correct to see a distinction here between the standing of the Church and of Israel, as the Church can by no means be said to make itself 'ready', the question of grace and works has nothing to do with the passage, for the word simply refers to the adornment of the bride which was so customary in Bible lands. In the verse following, however, there is a reference to 'works':
'And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white (shining): for fine linen is the righteousness of saints (righteous award of the saints)’ (Rev. 19:8).

There appears to be a need for careful distinction in connection with those who make up the marriage celebration of that day. The Wife cannot be ‘All Israel’ because Israel has also to supply ‘the friend of the bridegroom’, ‘the virgins her companions’, those ‘bidden to the marriage of the King’s Son’, and those set forth under the figure of ‘the wise and foolish virgins’. This being so, it appears that a portion of Israel are chosen as the Bride. The ‘righteous award’ seems to indicate some recognition of faithfulness, and this is quite in harmony with the whole of the book. To each of the seven churches a reward is promised to ‘him that overcometh’. Those who come out of the great tribulation are said to have ‘washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb’. Some are said to have done His commandments, or to have washed their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and to enter into the city. In this very chapter there are at least two companies, the Lamb’s wife, and the guests:

‘Write, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb’ (19:9).

As may be expected the word ‘Blessed’ comes seven times in the Revelation, and the words just quoted from chapter 19 come centrally in the list.

‘Blessed’, in Revelation

A 1:3. Blessed.—Reader, hearer and keeper of the words of this prophecy.

B 14:13. Blessed.—The Dead which die in the Lord.

C 16:15. Blessed.—He that watcheth and keepeth his garments.

D 19:9. Blessed.—They which are called to marriage supper.

C 20:6. Blessed.—He that hath part in the first resurrection.

A 22:7. Blessed.—He that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy.

B 22:14. Blessed.—They that do His commandments.

Right to tree of life.
Apart from the passages which speak of hearing or keeping the sayings of this prophecy, the other passages under B and C speak of the overcomer. This helps us to see that those who respond to the call to the marriage supper are overcomers too. The case of the man who had not the wedding garment will come to mind, and by reflection from chapter 19:8 we see that this also indicates the 'righteous award' of the saints. In the case of the ten virgins, it was the 'ready' ones that entered into the marriage.

In concluding this section the angel said, 'These are the true words of God'. We take it that these words cover Revelation chapters 17, 18 and 19:1-9. There follows a series of visions commencing with the formula 'and I saw', which concludes in 21:5 where again we read, 'These words are true and faithful'. One of the seven angels again comes forward and 'shows' John, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and he also 'showed' the river and the tree of life. Again come the words, 'These sayings are faithful and true'. These passages punctuate the grand conclusion of the book. Babylon judged, the marriage of the Lamb, the riding forth of the Word of God, the first resurrection, the Great White Throne, the new heavens and earth, the abolition of the curse, sorrow and death, the detailed description of the new Jerusalem, and at last, Paradise restored. What a galaxy, what a constellation, thrice confirmed to us by the words, 'These are the true and faithful words of God'!

Dark as the outlook may be now, and thicker the darkness yet to come, faith pierces the gloom and sees ahead the judgment of all that oppresses and enslaves, and the blessing and peace that must surely come when the Lord takes to Himself His great power and reigns. We echo the seer's closing prayer, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus'.

What event is it that demands an opened heaven? What event is it that must come at the climax of revelation? Surely nothing less than the Coming of the Lord in great
power and glory! Babylon has by this time fallen. Satan's last outpost has gone down with terrific judgments. The universal dominion of the beast gives way to the reign of the King of kings. The harlot gives place to the bride, the Lamb's wife. The wicked city passes away and the new Jerusalem is established.

Here at this moment is fulfilled the great bulk of Old Testament prophecy. Practically with one voice the prophets cried to Israel, 'Behold! Thy King cometh'. Psalm 72 was penned in the light of that glorious day when David's greater Son should reign in righteousness and peace. To 'see the King in His beauty' summarized the expectancy of every believing heart. At last the Seer reaches that precious, that tremendous moment, when heaven opens, and the heavenly rider comes forth. As He rides forth the seventh trumpet rings out throughout the heavens, and great voices are heard crying out the glad news:

'THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD ARE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD, AND OF HIS CHRIST. And He shall reign for the ages of the ages. Amen ... We give thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast; because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power, and hast reigned' (Rev. 11:15-17 author's translation).

The same voices go on further to say that this coming in glory to reign is associated with the anger of the nations, the time of the judgment of the dead, the time for the reward of the Lord's servants, and the time for the destruction of those who destroy the earth (Rev. 11:18,19). These words are an epitome of Revelation 17 to 20. In Revelation 11:19 the apostle said:

'And the temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament (covenant)'.

This 'opening' precedes the opening of heaven in chapter 19. God's covenant is about to be fulfilled, and Christ, Who is now at the right hand of the throne of God in the heavens, is 'manifested in glory'. As though to assure the fainting heart that these things are sure of fulfilment, the rider of the white horse is called Faithful
and True, and three times does the narrative pause to declare the truthfulness of these sayings.

Revelation 17:1 to 19:9.— The harlot judged. The wife of the Lamb ready.

**THE ANGEL’S ASSURANCE.** — *These are the true sayings of God*.

Revelation 19:11 to 21:5. — ‘**AND I SAW**’:

2. The Supper (19:17,18).
3. The Beast (19:19-21).
5. Millennial Reign (20:4-6).
8. Holy City (21:2-5).

**THE ASSURANCE FROM THE THRONE.** — *These words are true and faithful*.

Revelation 21:9 to 22:7 — ‘**AND HE SHEWED ME**’:

1. The Bride (21:9).

**THE ANGELS ASSURANCE.** — *These sayings are faithful and true*.

The first of the series of events prefaced with the words, ‘And I saw’, is the glorious apocalypse of Christ so long anticipated throughout this book:

‘And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war’ (Rev. 19:11).

**Judgment and War.** — These two themes are stated as the object of this appearance. ‘In righteousness doth He judge and make war’. For war the Lord mounts a white horse. For judgment a white throne. In both offices He is Faithful and True. The title, Faithful, turns the mind back to Isaiah:
‘There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots ... He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes ... but with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the OPPRESSOR (‘ariz, instead of ‘erez, "the earth") with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked (LAWLESS ONE). And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb ...’ ( Isa. 11:1-6).

Psalm 45 is also clearly indicated in Revelation 19. There in that Psalm are united together the triumphant Rider and the King’s daughter. Space will not permit the citation, but the whole Psalm should be read through. The reference in Revelation 19:13 to the vesture dipped in blood shows that here in this glorious apocalypse we have the fulfilment of Isaiah 63:1-4:

‘Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment. For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come’.

We learned from Revelation 1:10 that the prophetic setting of the book was ‘The Day of the Lord’. Here the character of that day is given, namely, ‘the day of vengeance’, and its object and issue is ‘the year of my redeemed’. The word ‘vengeance’ occurs six times in Isaiah, and this sixfold vengeance with its contexts is an illumination of Revelation 19 and 20:

‘For it is the day of the LORD’S vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion’ ( Isa. 34:8).

The context speaks of the Lord’s judgment upon the nations, the passing away of the heavens, the turning of the land into ‘confusion’ and ‘emptiness’ — the same condition (tohu and bohu) as that of Genesis 1:2. In Isaiah 35 we have the blessing that flows out to Israel when the
wilderness shall ‘blossom as the rose’, and there we have the next reference to vengeance:

'Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; He will come and save you' (Isa. 35:4).

This chapter concludes one great portion of Isaiah's prophecy, and the glory and the triumphant issue of the revelation of Christ can be felt as one reads the chapter through. The next reference to vengeance has definitely to do with Babylon:

'Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans ... I will take vengeance ... thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms' (Isa. 47:1-5).

Babylon's fall immediately precedes the Coming of the Lord in the Revelation, and here in Isaiah it is especially prominent. Just before the glorious command sounds forth, 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee' (Isa. 60:1), we find another parallel with Revelation 19:

'For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon His head; and He put on the garments of vengeance' (Isa. 59:17).

In Isaiah 61:2,3 we read:

'To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes'.

Then comes the last reference, that of Isaiah 63, with which we commenced. The object of the Lord's coming is further specified in Revelation 19:15:

'And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God'.

The quotation here from the second Psalm throws a vivid light upon the scene. Psalm 2:1,2 shows the
condition of the world immediately before the second advent:

'The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against His ANOINTED (CHRIST).

This brings down the judgment. God's rightful King ascends the throne and to Him it is given 'To rule with a rod of iron':

'And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS' (Rev. 19:16).

Three names are said to belong to the Lord in this vision:

(1) He had a name written that no man knew but He Himself.
(2) His name is called, The Word of God.
(3) He hath a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

The first name, known only to the Lord Himself, is associated with the wearing of many crowns. In Revelation 2:17 the overcomer will receive a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. In Philippians 2:9,10 the exaltation of Christ is accompanied by the giving of the name which is above every name. It appears idle for us to pretend to a knowledge where Scripture declares that the subject is known only to the Lord. It is possible however that the meaning of the passage is not so much that no one knew in the sense of being acquainted with the fact, but that no one perceived or fathomed the meaning of the name which the Lord received. It is suggestive that in Philippians 2 and Revelation 19 the statement concerning the granting of a name which is not made known is immediately followed by a name that is well known. In Philippians 2 it is the name 'Jesus' that is associated with the Name above every name. In Revelation 19 it is the 'Word of God' and 'KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS' that seem to expand and explain that which otherwise could not be known.

The Word of God.— In this title is compressed the revelation of Christ's place in the purpose of the ages.
Manifestation seems to have much in common with it. Speech reveals the unseen thought, and for the great purpose of the ages Christ became the image of the Invisible God. The theme is too great for a mere note. For the present we would say that the coming together here of the two names, The Word, and King of kings is to indicate to us that the One Who came forth as the great Firstborn of all creation in order to accomplish the reconciliation, expressed in the term ‘Fullness’, is here seen bringing to pass that phase which is summed up in the words king and kingdom. The glorious millennial kingdom, followed by the even more glorious reign of the closing age (1 Cor. 15:24,25), is one of the many factors in bringing about the end ‘that God may be all in all’.

The reference to the winepress shows that Revelation 14:8-20 is another compressed anticipation of this glorious apocalypse. The King cometh. The saints shall reign. In His days there shall be an abundance of peace. He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. Surely whatever our dispensational standing, whatever the hope of our calling, we can with heart and voice take up the Advent song and say:

‘Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest’ (Matt. 21:9).

‘And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth’ (Isa. 24:21).

For the purposes of redemption the Lord Jesus Christ became a man of ‘sorrows’; ‘He was crucified through weakness’. He knew what it was to be despised, to suffer hunger, to thirst, to be the butt of His enemies, ‘as a lamb before his shearsers is dumb’. That phase, praise God, is over. The humiliation, the weakness, the cross, with their fruits of grace and peace, are finished. He has ascended to the right hand of God, there to wait until iniquity reaches its full measure.
Marriage of the Lamb & the Revelation 371

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool ... The Lord at Thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with the dead bodies; He shall shatter the head over a land far extended" (Psa. 110:1-6 author's translation).

When the Lord comes again, the second time, it will be for a dual purpose. This dual purpose is expressed in Isaiah 63:4:

1. The day of vengeance is in My heart.
2. The year of My redeemed is come.

The Coming of the Lord will bring about the restoration of all things that have been spoken by the prophets, and will also bring about the destruction of every opposing force, that the purpose of the ages may be brought to a glorious conclusion. In the passage before us we have these two elements together. He comes not to redeem, but to claim the fruit of redemption and to punish the high ones that are on high. No gospel is preached to the gathered armies of the beast, the Rider on the white horse rides forth to judge and to make war. Under the sixth seal this Second Coming is spoken of as:

"The wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come" (Rev. 6:16,17).

Under the sixth vial this awful period is said to be:

"The battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Rev. 16:14).

The angel who stands in the sun calls upon the fowls of heaven to participate in:

"The great supper of God" (Rev. 19:17 author's translation).

We are not told in Revelation 19 how the beast and false prophet gather this huge army together, nor where the gathering ground will be. This has been explained in earlier chapters. We learn from chapter 16:13,14 that there issues from the mouth of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet three unclean spirits of demons, who have the power to substantiate their message with 'signs following',
for they work miracles. These unclean emissaries go forth unto the kings of the whole habitable world to gather them together in a place called Armageddon. We are not told in chapter 19 how the Lord will come, and what the effect of His appearing will have upon this host. This we learn in chapter 6:12-14:

‘Lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places’ (Rev. 6:12-14).

These are the accompaniments of the Second Coming, as the Lord said in Matthew 24:29-31; only in that prophecy the other feature, namely, ‘the year of the redeemed’, is uppermost. The effects of these appalling sights upon the kings of the earth and their armies are only faintly realized as we hear them, in the words of the prophecy, calling on the mountains and rocks to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. In Revelation 19:20 we read:

‘And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him ... These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone’.

Here is fulfilled Psalm 110:6 which says, ‘He shall shatter the head over a land far extended’, for the beast exercised dominion over the kings of the whole habitable world. The summoning of the fowls of heaven to eat the flesh of kings, and captains, of mighty men, of horse and rider, of free and bond, small and great, fulfils two other statements in the same Psalm, that is:

‘He shall fill the places with the dead bodies’ (Psa. 110:6), and He ‘shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath’ (Psa. 110:5).

The Scriptural descriptions of the beast show that it is the master stroke of Satan, and that it rules in Satan’s name and in Satan’s interest (see Rev. 13). The dragon does not figure in the record before us; it is the beast and the false prophet who are cast into the lake of fire. Immediately
following the judgment of the beast we read of the binding of Satan. An angel is seen descending from the heavens having the key of the abyss and also a great chain:

‘And he laid hold of the dragon, that ancient serpent, which is the Devil (Greek), and Satan (Hebrew), and bound him for a thousand years’ (Rev. 20:2 author’ translation).

The thousand year reign of Christ will not be the final and perfect kingdom; it will be preparatory, and in some ways a period of judgment and restraint. The beast and the false prophet will never again work their deceptive ways among men. Satan will be bound for the whole period. Outside temptation will be removed, but because of the nature of the millennial kingdom Satan is not cast into the lake of fire until after this kingdom has finished, as he is to be given a little season as a final test both for himself and for the nations of the earth. Of this we shall learn more in its place.

In this chapter we have seen the short sharp work of judgment that falls before the kingdom can be set-up. We are mindful that our salvation is by grace, and that vengeance belongs to the Lord. It is however a comfort to know that these awful leaders of such high-handed rebellion are not to go on for ever. The Day of the Lord is said to come as a ‘destruction from the Almighty’, and it is said that ‘He shall destroy the sinners out of it’. Then the Lord shall cause to cease the arrogance of the proud and the loftiness of tyrants (Isa. 13:6-13). It is evident that all things that offend shall be gathered out before the righteous can shine in the kingdom of their Father.
CHAPTER 15

The Millennium; its Character, its Failure, its Foreshadowing

Revelation 20

The word *millennium* simply means 'a thousand', and the millennial reign of Christ is that reign which lasts a thousand years. The millennial reign is bounded at its two extremes by a series of events which indicate the peculiar character of that kingdom.

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<th>At the beginning</th>
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<td>(1) Satan bound for 1,000 years.</td>
<td>(1) Satan loosed when 1,000 years finish.</td>
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<td>(2) Nations deceived no more until 1,000 years finish.</td>
<td>(2) Nations deceived after 1,000 years finish.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) Thrones and judgment given to saints.</td>
<td>(3) The camp of the saints encompassed.</td>
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When we read the writings of men on prophecy we are liable to be carried away by their descriptions of this kingdom, and to ascribe much of the blessedness and glory that belong to a later period to this one of the 1,000 years. Coming to the Revelation itself with all the high hopes implanted by conferences and prophetic literature, the reader is apt to feel somewhat disappointed. Here in Revelation 20 is no glowing description of that kingdom, no details of its blessedness or its beauty. Satan is bound certainly, but the very verse that tells us so goes straight on to say:

'After that he must be loosed a little season' (Rev. 20:3).

The millennium ends exactly as every other dispensation had ended, namely, in failure. This one fact enables us to see that instead of understanding this kingdom to be the *beginning* of the Lord's work of power
and glory, it is to be understood rather as the last of His dealings with men. The millennial kingdom finds its basis in the words of Exodus 19:3-6:

‘Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation’.

The special features of this basic passage are:

(1) Israel separated from all the nations.
(2) Israel a peculiar treasure.
(3) Israel a ‘royal priesthood’.
(4) The conditions are obedience and keeping the covenant.
(5) The words ‘for all the earth is Mine’ suggest that this special favour is shown to Israel with a view to the blessing of the nations.

Israel utterly failed to fulfil the conditions, and instead of being a blessing in the earth, they became a curse.

The prophet Malachi speaks of a remnant of faithful ones who feared the Lord in the days of apostasy, and of such the Lord said:

‘They shall be Mine ... in that day when I make up My jewels (peculiar treasure) ... then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not’ (Mal. 3:17,18).

If we look back to Malachi 2 we shall find that the great controversy is concerning the failure of the priests. The Lord says that, as a result of their failure, their very blessings shall be cursed. Special emphasis is placed upon the fact that they had ‘corrupted the covenant’ (2:8), and that they had not preserved their peculiar separateness unto the Lord (2:11,12).

The apostle Peter forges another link between Israel and the millennium. To the dispersed of Israel that were looking for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, who had been redeemed from the vain conversation
received by tradition from their fathers, the apostle addresses the words:

'Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices ... Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people' (1 Pet. 2:5,9).

The whole atmosphere of this epistle is that of suffering in view of glory. This is seen to be the same in Revelation 20. First, however, let us see Revelation 1:5,6:

'Unto Him that loved us, and washed (loosed) us from our sins by His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests (a kingdom of priests) unto God and His Father'.

Here we find that the royal priesthood is composed not of those who obeyed and kept the covenant, but of those who have been redeemed. In harmony with this is the song of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders:

'Thou wast slain, and didst purchase a people for God by Thy blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and didst make them to our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign over the earth' (Rev. 5:9,10 author's translation).

Coming now to Revelation 20:4 we learn further details concerning those who constitute the first resurrection and the royal priesthood:

'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and the souls of them that had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, and because of the Word of God, and whosoever had not worshipped the Beast, nor yet his image, and did not receive his mark on their foreheads and on their hands, both lived again and reigned with Christ a thousand years' (Rev. 20:4 author's translation).

These are essentially the overcomers of the Apocalypse. That such do not exclude others of like precious faith we may learn from Matthew 19:27,28:

'We have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel'.
Or we may remember Revelation chapter 6, where we read of those who had been slain for the Word of God, to whom white robes were given, and the information that they were to rest a little season until their fellowservants should be killed even as they had been (6:9-11). In Revelation 20 there is an evident reference to the great prophecy of Daniel 7, as we can see when we come to compare the passages together.

**Daniel 7**

'I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven' (7:13).

'I beheld till the thrones were cast down (set) ... the judgment was set' (7:9,10).

'The books were opened' (7:10).

'And judgment was given to the saints of the most High' (7:22).

'And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom ... And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High' (7:22,27).

**Revelation 1 and 20**

'Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him' (1:7).

'I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it' (20:11).

'The books were opened' (20:12).

'And judgment was given unto them' (20:4).

'... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years ... This is the first resurrection ... They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years' (20:4-6).

There are several other items of importance we must consider together before we can come to a true conclusion as to the character of the millennium; we have seen:

1. That the millennial kingdom ends in revolt and is therefore like all preceding dispensations.
2. It is the fulfilment of the promise originally made at Sinai unto all Israel.
3. It is administered by those who have 'overcome'.
4. Israel's position in this kingdom is that of a nation of priests for the nations outside.
When we think of the millennium, we usually think of that condition of peace that is intimated in the words:

‘The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock’ (Isa. 65:25).

It is a mistake however to assume that such is said to be the condition of things all over the earth at that time. Both Isaiah 65:25 and 11:9 add these important words:

‘They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain’.

‘In all My holy mountain’ is not the same in extent as all the earth, and this passage is one of many that indicate the peculiar position of Israel in the millennium, in much the same way as Babylon shall remain ‘a burnt mountain’ as a warning to all the earth during the same period. Another passage of similar import is Isaiah 60:1,2:

‘Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon THEE. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the EARTH, and gross darkness the PEOPLES: but the LORD shall arise upon THEE, and His glory shall be seen upon THEE’.

There is the greatest difference indicated between the nation of Israel and the nations during this kingdom.

‘The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee ... The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yca, those nations shall be utterly wasted’ (Isa. 60:10-12).

‘Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named (called) the PRIESTS OF THE LORD: men shall call you the MINISTERS OF OUR GOD’ (Isa. 61:5,6).

Israel are here seen in their position as the royal priesthood, and the surrounding nations as their servants. It was one of the great duties of the priest to teach:

‘For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth’ (Mal. 2:7; see also Lev. 10:11),

and therefore when the millennial kingdom is set-up we find that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be set-up as the head of the mountains, and to this centre all the nations shall ‘stream’ and shall say:
Let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of ZION shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from JERUSALEM’ (Isa. 2:3).

The Revised Version margin of Psalm 72:10 reads:
‘The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall render tribute’.

Turning to Isaiah 25 we may notice some further limitations that may at first surprise us. A feast is to be made unto all peoples, but it is to be held ‘in this mountain’ (verse 6). The veil that is cast over all the peoples and which is spread over all nations is to be done away, but once again it is ‘in this mountain’ (verse 7). In the same context we have these two opposite thoughts:

‘He will swallow up death in victory’ (Isa. 25:8).
‘Moab shall be trodden down, or threshed, even as straw is threshed under the wheels of the threshing cart’ (Isa. 25:10 author’s translation).

This threshing of Moab is connected with the mountain of the Lord, for it reads:

‘For in this mountain shall the hand of the LORD rest, and Moab shall be trodden down (threshed) etc.’ (Isa. 25:10).

When the desert blossoms as the rose, when the eyes of the blind see, and the ears of the deaf hear, when the ransomed of the Lord return to Zion (Isa. 35), the same chapter says:

‘Behold, your God will come with vengeance’ (Isa. 35:4).

We must therefore be prepared to find in the millennial kingdom the execution of judgment. Not only so, but Scripture reveals that there will be sin in that kingdom, and death as a consequence; in other words, the king who shall reign will:

‘break (rule) them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel’ (Psa. 2:9).

That this is characteristic of millennial rule is seen by comparing Revelation 2:27, 12:5 and 19:15:
'... he that overcometh ... will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father' (Rev. 2:26,27).

Psalm 110, which speaks also of that day, reveals the Lord ruling in the midst of enemies, judging among the nations, and filling the places with dead bodies! Strange symbols of peace! The Oxford Gesenius renders verse 3:

'Thy people will be (all) voluntariness in the day of Thy host'.

In marked contrast with Israel will be the feigned and constrained obedience of the nations. The Revised Version marginal reading of Psalm 18:44 is:

'The strangers shall yield feigned obedience unto Me'.

So again in Psalms 66:3 and 81:15. The character of this kingdom is moreover manifested by turning to the Revised Version margin of Daniel 9:24. 'To restrain transgression'. This idea of restraint is seen in the fact that during this period Satan will be bound, but not destroyed. Psalm 21:1-13; 48:4-7; 66:7; 68:21; 72:9-14, and 97:1-7 seem to speak of that kingdom and the presence therein of evil doers. Psalm 101:8 reads, 'I will early destroy all the wicked of the land'. The word 'early' is rendered by Rotherham 'morning by morning' and indicates summary judgment upon offenders. Psalm 149 calls upon Israel to rejoice, and the children of Zion to be joyful in their king. The Psalm is evidently millennial:

'Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen (nations), and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all His saints. Praise ye the LORD (Hallelujah)' (Psa. 149:6-9).

Here once again we see the 'iron rod' in action. It is evident from Zechariah 14:16-19 that throughout the millennium, and not merely at the commencement, judgment will fall upon disobedience. The last two verses of Isaiah bring before us a dual picture — 'all flesh' shall come to worship before the Lord, and they shall also look
upon the carcases of transgressors (presumably in the valley called Gehenna), and they shall be an abhorring unto ‘all flesh’. Death, if it occur in the millennium, will be the direct result of personal sin. This seems to be the meaning of Isaiah 65:20. The Authorized Version reads thus:

‘There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed’ (Isa. 65:20).

Rotherham translates the passage:

‘But a youth a hundred years old may die, yea a sinner a hundred years old shall be accused’,

the suggestion being that for one to die in that kingdom, even at the age of a hundred years, would be to die young, and that such a death would be the direct outcome of sin.

The millennial kingdom is not the glorious reign of Christ that ushers in the consummation. The millennium is rather man’s most favoured opportunity and most signal failure. The conditions are even more favourable than those of Eden in some respects. For here no outside tempter can enter, Satan being bound for the whole period, yet revolt spreads rapidly as soon as Satan is let loose.

The millennial kingdom is Israel’s sphere of blessedness wherein all the promises related to them as a peculiar people to the Lord shall be fulfilled. The millennium foreshadows the perfect kingdom. What will take place over the breadth of the earth after the millennium, takes place during the thousand years in Israel’s land only. One nation, Israel, shall be ‘born at a stroke’ (Isa. 66:8). One people, Israel, ‘shall be all righteous’ (Isa. 60:21), and the days of their mourning shall be ended. But the ends of the earth will slowly learn the lesson. A brighter and a better day succeeds the thousand-year reign of Christ and His people. The royal priesthood will have accomplished its purpose. Through this chosen ‘seed’ shall all the families of the earth have
been blessed; many will join themselves to the Lord and come under the promise:

'The sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD ... even them will I bring to My holy mountain' (Isa. 56:6,7),

for the Lord’s house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. The law at Sinai and the nation of Israel afterwards were under the delegated authority of angels, but the ‘world to come’ has not been submitted to angels, but to the saints, particularly those of ‘the seed of Abraham’ (Heb. 2), which embraces all those of like precious faith. This kingdom is the last manifestation of the failure of delegated rule.

The kingdom of the Son is marked by the subjection of all rule and authority. He shows Who is that blessed and only Potentate, and at the close of that rule and that rule alone we reach perfection and the goal of the ages. All down the age has been heard the murmuring challenge of the sovereignty vested only in Christ. Israel failed to hold that sceptre; the Gentiles failed too. Adam in Eden, and man in the millennial kingdom equally fail. Every age and dispensation converges upon one thought, every knee shall bow at last to one Lord, every tongue will confess but one Name, Revelation 5 shall be repeated upon a grander scale:

'Who is worthy? ... no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth ... was found worthy ...' (Rev. 5:2-4).

'And they sung a new song, saying, THOU art worthy' (Rev. 5:9).

How are we to understand the words ‘the first resurrection’ of Revelation 20? If it means the first of all that shall take place, then the resurrection of the church of the One Body must take place later. The statement of verse 5 has a bearing, for there we read:

'But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished' (Rev. 20:5).

According to the teaching of Revelation 20 the resurrection that follows the ‘first’ is that which brings ‘all the rest’ before the great white throne. This increases the difficulty, for not only is the hope of the One Body
involved, but the resurrection of 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4 also. In Revelation 21:1 we have these words:

‘And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away’.

Here we have the same word ‘first’ used in chapters 20:5 and 21:1. Now we are already acquainted with the teaching of 2 Peter 3:4-13, where we find a distinct reference to a third heaven and earth:

(1) ‘The world that then was’.
(2) ‘The heavens and the earth which are now’.
(3) ‘A new heaven and a new earth’.

It is evident therefore that the heaven and earth which passed away in Revelation 21:1 is really the second, namely, ‘the heavens and earth which are now’, and the word ‘first’ is in contrast with the word ‘new’ and should be translated ‘the former’. This same meaning is intended in Revelation 20:5:

‘This is the former resurrection (of the two under notice)’.

These two resurrections have one thing in common, they are both connected with the second death. To the overcomer in Smyrna came the words:

‘Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life ... he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death’ (Rev. 2:10,11).

This overcomer is numbered among those whose part is in the ‘first resurrection’; for them the second death holds no terror:

‘Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power’ (Rev. 20:6).

Looking back again to Revelation 2 we observe the title of the Lord when He speaks to the angel of the church in Smyrna:

‘These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive’ (Rev. 2:8).
Most, if not all, the titles of the speaker to the seven churches are found together in the description given in chapter 1. This can be seen by comparing the opening words to each church in chapters 2 and 3 with the description given in chapter 1. The title with which we are immediately concerned is evidently taken from Revelation 1:17,18:

‘Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for the ages of the ages, and have the keys of death and Hades’ (Rev. 1:17,18 author’s translation).

These statements throw light upon the character of the second death. According to our understanding of the first death, will be our understanding of the second. The traditional view is that while the body turns to dust, the soul, or the person himself, passes on in an unclothed state, either to the immediate presence of the Lord, to Paradise, or to Purgatory. For ourselves we believe that the dead are dead. The body has returned to the dust as it was, the spirit has returned to God who gave it, the man has ceased to be a living soul, and knows nothing until resurrection.

If we take the view that death is not the cessation of consciousness or of mental and spiritual activity, we shall probably believe the same may be true of the second death, and invest that second death with all the traditional horrors of the orthodox ‘hell’; if we believe that death is the end of all conscious being, we shall believe that the second death likewise is the end of all conscious being too. It does not follow that the second death will be exactly similar to the first, but it cannot be totally dissimilar, for that would invalidate the idea contained in the word ‘second’. For example, the Lord Jesus Christ is called ‘the second Man’ (1 Cor. 15:47).

In some aspects He is much unlike the first man, as the context elaborates. The one is natural; the other is spiritual. The one is earthy; the other is heavenly. The one is simply man; the other while being the second Man, is the Lord. There is however no violence done to the conception of a series. There is an advance from earthly to
heavenly, from soul to spirit, but throughout all the change and progression the one word 'man' remains constant, whether spoken of Adam or of Christ. So in Hebrews 8:7 there is the 'first covenant' and the 'second'. They have marked differences, as far apart as law is from grace, but they remain 'covenants' all the way through.

So with the 'second death'. However much more intense the destructive qualities of the lake of fire may be than the dissolution of body and spirit, commonly known as death, the character of death will remain constant right through. We find from 1 Corinthians 15:18 the character of the first death set forth by an extreme case:

'Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are PERISHED'.

What would make the death even of the redeemed so utterly and hopeless? The denial of the resurrection. Without resurrection the death even of the saint would mean hopeless annihilation. Is there a resurrection from the second death? Not a glimmer of hope can be found at the end of Revelation 20. Nowhere throughout the pages of Scripture is such a statement to be found. Some there are who see such a hope in 1 Corinthians 15:26, but in this we cannot agree. Our reasons have been set forth in fair detail in our book *The Apostle of the Reconciliation* and have also been given further consideration in another series both in *The Berean Expositor* and in pamphlet form. There will be opportunity and occasion to speak more fully of the second death when we reach the closing verses of Revelation 20 in the order of exposition. We are at present more concerned with the overcomer of the second death than with those who pass into it.

We are told that the second death hath no power on those who attain to the first resurrection. The word 'power' is a translation of *exousia*, and means authority. We shall find the origin of this statement in Luke 12:4,5:
'Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear Him, which after He hath killed hath authority to cast into Gehenna; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him' (Luke 12:4,5 Author’s translation).

The first death ‘kills the body’, and its authority ceases at that point. God can go further. Matthew 10:28 records the Lord’s utterance, and uses slightly different words to do so:

‘Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him Which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Gehenna)’ (Matt. 10:28).

If the Lord spoke in Aramaic to the people, then both Luke and Matthew together provide a full translation. Luke’s words ‘to cast into Gehenna’, become in Matthew’s record ‘to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna’. Gehenna is limited in its scope, but is a foreshadowing of the lake of fire at the end.

The second death has this authority. It is so constituted by the Lord that it can destroy both soul and body. Apart from philosophy altogether, it is obvious that the destruction of soul and body is to all intents and purposes annihilation. Such will cease to be. Who they are and why they pass under this dread authority we leave until we reach the passage in Revelation 20. All those who attain the first resurrection are free from all fear of the second death. It is not so with those who wait until the second resurrection. Some of those do enter into the second death.

The reign of these favoured ones is the reign of priests. Both on earth and in the heavens ‘over the earth’ (Rev. 5:10) there will be a royal priesthood. The nation of Israel on earth; the overcomers over the earth; and under their dual ministry the nations are taught the truth of God, and many will pass from darkness to light.

The apostle Paul, in Romans 15:16, speaks of his ministry to the Gentiles as a priestly work: ‘that the offering up of the Gentiles might be accepted’. If Paul’s
ministry among the Gentiles, as set forth in the Acts, is any foreshadowing of the priestly ministry of the royal priesthood during the thousand years, the blessedness of that millennial rule cannot be described in words. We can only look forward with high hope and anticipation. But, like as it was in the case of Paul, so it will be again. While an unnumbered host are saved, apostasy and revolt follow hard upon the close of the period. Perfection comes under the personal administration of Christ. The millennial reign is the final preparation for the working out of the great consummation.

When the thousand years have run their course, Satan is let loose out of his prison. Revelation 20:3 has already told us that ‘he must be loosed a little season’; here we see the purpose. We must notice carefully what the Scriptures actually say here. We must not make a mistake and speak of the nations as a whole. The nations that yield to Satan’s last deception and perish at the hand of God are specified:

‘And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea’ (Rev. 20:7,8).

During the priestly rule of Israel and the overcomers many nations shall be joined to the Lord, as prophecy testifies. The nations who are deceived by Satan at the close of the millennium are found in the four quarters (Greek gonia, ‘angles’, same word translated ‘corner’ in 7:1) of the earth, as distinct from God’s holy city and centre. Their name is given as Gog and Magog. This will not be the first time that Gog and Magog have threatened the land and people of Israel.

In Ezekiel 38 and 39 we read of a gathering of nations under Gog of the land of Magog. Just who Gog and Magog may be is a very difficult problem to solve. It is usual to interpret them as general names of the northern nations of Europe and Asia. This may be true, but is not by any means all the truth or the most important aspect of
it. We are not concerned as to whether these nations originally occupied the north, for after the millennium they will be upon the outskirts of the earth at all points of the compass. We are much more concerned with their relation to Israel and the purpose of God.

Israel's first entry into the land of promise was accompanied by conflict with the Canaanites. These nations were of such a nature that nothing less than utter extinction was decreed against them. In Deuteronomy 3:1-13 we read of Og, the king of Bashan. We read that only Og, king of Bashan, remained of the remnant of the giants, and his bedstead was nine cubits long and four cubits broad. The threescore cities mentioned in verse 4 have all been seen and counted in our own time. That the rendering 'giants' is the true one, any reader of Dr. Porter's Giant Cities of Bashan will agree. In Numbers 24:7 Balaam refers to Israel's ascendancy in the millennium:

'And his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted' (Num. 24:7).

The Samaritan Text here reads 'Agog' instead of Agag, and this appears to have been the word before the translators of the Septuagint, for they give 'Gog'. These sidelights give a somewhat different character to the nations that spring into open revolt at the end of the thousand years. Is there not sufficient history recorded in the Word to show that certain nations are to be reckoned peculiarly the Devil's own? Was Og, king of Bashan, not 'of his father the Devil'? Do we credit the Lord with the responsibility of the creation of the Rephaim, the Nephilim, the giants and monsters of antiquity? Did not God give an exhibition of His utter abhorrence of the result of the marriages of sons of God with the daughters of men, by sending the Flood? Does not the order for the utter extermination of the Amorites, the Amalekites and the Canaanites generally point to the same thing? Does not Goliath of Gath typify the same awful and Satanic enemy?
When Satan goes out to the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, he goes out to his own. They rise as one man and compass the camp of the saints about and the beloved city. Their destruction is immediate and without remedy:

‘Fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them’ (Rev. 20:9).

In chapter 19 the armies led by the beast and the false prophet are slain by the Lord, and their flesh is afterwards devoured by the fowls of the heavens. Here the fire from God not only kills but devours, nothing is left for the birds of the air.

We do not believe Gog and Magog will stand before the great white throne. The fire which falls from heaven is for them the second death. Of such Psalm 1:5 speaks:

‘The ungodly shall not stand (or rise) in the judgment’.

When Israel’s day comes, and they sing their millennial song of triumph (Isa. 26:1), they will look back upon the days when the seed of the serpent had dominion over them. Of such they say:

‘They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased (the Rephaim, giants), they shall not rise: therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish’ (Isa. 26:14).

So will it be with Gog and Magog at the end of the millennium. The conflict of the two seeds, ‘the seed of woman’ and ‘the seed of the serpent’, runs throughout the Scriptures and the entire course of the ages. The seed of promise, triumph in Christ their great Kinsman-Redeemer. The seed of the serpent, perish utterly and completely, so much so that they have no resurrection. Here in Revelation 20:9 we see another section of them ‘visited and destroyed’. It is God’s intention to gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and the new heavens and new earth can only be ushered in by the fire of 20:14,15.
Not only will Israel remember their oppressors in the day of their exaltation, they will also be very sensibly reminded of their past sins.

This may be seen by reading the closing verses of Ezekiel 16. We cannot quote at length, but give the last verse:

'That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD' (Ezek. 16:63).

Another suggestive passage is Ezekiel 44:9-14, where we find certain of the Levites who went into idolatry are not permitted to exercise their office in full, but are made servants at the gate, not being permitted to come near unto the Lord. This particular honour is reserved for the sons of Zadok. These are rewarded for their fidelity, they:

'... kept the charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from Me' (Ezek. 44:15).

It is evident from this distinction that the element of reward and loss obtains in the millennial kingdom. This is further exemplified in Ezekiel 48, when compared with Revelation 7. The tribe of Dan forfeit a place among the 144,000 sealed overcomers, but they do not lose their place in the earthly apportionment of the kingdom which is theirs by covenant, not by merit, for the tribe of Dan is mentioned in Ezekiel 48:1.

The question of reward or forfeiture in the Gospels and Epistles has much to do with position and glory in this kingdom. Those being found faithful in small things are rewarded by being made responsible for great ones. Those who hid their talent in the earth are deprived of glory in the Lord's presence.

Returning to Revelation 20 we take notice of one further item. We have seen Satan loosed, and the nations that were deceived suddenly devoured by fire. We now notice what is said of Satan himself:
'And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (the ages of the ages)’ (Rev. 20:10).

The expression ‘for the ages of the ages’, eis tous aionas ton aionon, occurs in the Book of the Revelation thirteen times, and is distributed as follows:

‘For the ages of the ages’


C Worshippers of God

(a) 4:9. The living creatures.

(b) 4:10. The twenty-four elders.

A 5:13. Every creature.

C Worshippers of Satan

(a) 14:11. Smoke of torment.

(b) 15:7. The seven angels.


B 20:10. The Devil, beast and false prophet.

B 22:5. They shall reign.

The passages which are specially connected with our present subject are the two groups of four, lettered C C. In the first set we have all creation, including the four living creatures, the twenty-four elders, and all the angels joining in praise to God and to the Lamb. It is important to notice the universality of the scope of 5:13. What words can convey to us the sense of the universal better than these?

‘And every creature

which is in heaven,

and on earth,

and under the earth,

and such as are in the sea,

and all that are in them’ (Rev. 5:13).

Yet the worshippers of the beast, together with Satan, the beast and the false prophet themselves must be
excepted, otherwise we introduce discord into Scripture. This should be remembered when we are tempted to make universal application of the ‘all’s’ and ‘every’s’ of Scripture. In the case of those who worship the beast, and of Babylon itself, we read:

'The smoke of their (or her) torment ascendeth up (or rose up) for ever and ever (the ages of the ages)' (Rev. 14:11).

The ages of the ages is the great converging point of all time. There the smoke ceases to ascend, there every enemy is subjected, there the reign of the saints reaches its goal, there in fact the Son Himself shall vacate His mediatorial throne, and having accomplished the purpose of the ages,

'He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ... that God may be all in all' (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

In Ezekiel 28:11-19 which we understand to speak of Satan, we read that God says:

'Therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee' (Ezek. 28:18).

Thus ends the awful conflict of the ages. The thought of this torment and destruction is a terrible one, yet He Who measures the guilt by the gift of His Son is righteous in His vengeance, for perfect love must also know perfect hatred, otherwise it would be forever one-sided and unreal.

At the opening of the sixth seal great convulsions took place, causing the sun to become black, the moon to be like blood, the stars to fall, the heaven to be parted asunder as a scroll rolling itself up, and every mountain and island to be moved out of their places. Thus was ushered in the day of wrath, foretold in Isaiah 13:6-13; 34:1-5; Haggai 2:6,7,21,22; and Matthew 24:35. Now we have brought before us a more terrific movement. Not merely do the heavens part asunder and the mountains move, but John says:
‘And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from Whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them’ (Rev. 20:11).

‘No place’ seems to signify more than the mere idea of ‘room’ or ‘position’; it seems to indicate that the heavens and the earth that Peter said ‘are now’ have accomplished their purpose. This idea may be seen in such a passage as Hebrews 8:7:

‘For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second’.

Or again, Hebrews 12:17:

‘For he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears’.

In neither of these passages does ‘place’ bear the idea of physical or material locality, and the same applies to Revelation 20:11.

The heavens and the earth that are now will have run their appointed course by the time that the Great White Throne has been set up. They began as a result of Satan’s first rebellion, suggested though not stated in Genesis 1:2, when the first earth perished in the water. They will end when Satan’s last rebellion has come to its inglorious close, and not with a flood of water but a lake of fire:

‘By the word of God ... the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are laid up in store, kept for fire for the day of judgment and destruction of impious men ... in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with a fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up’ (2 Pet. 3:5-10 author’s translation).

In spite, therefore, of the words of a great commentator on Revelation 20:11, ‘To seek a literal sense in such a passage would be quite a superfluous undertaking’, we believe that we have here as literal a cosmic movement as in Genesis 1:2, the Deluge, the terrors of Sinai, or the rending rocks and opened tombs at the crucifixion of the Saviour:
‘And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God’ (Rev. 20:12).

Unless one had actually heard it denied, it would hardly seem necessary to say that ‘the dead’ who thus stand before this throne are raised and living again.

There are two items in this very chapter that necessitate the resurrection of all those that were not raised at the commencement of the millennium.

(1) The First Resurrection.— We observed earlier that the word ‘first’ means ‘former’, ‘the former of two’, and implies a second or later resurrection to follow.

(2) The rest of the dead lived not again until .... ‘Lived not again until’ necessarily means that when the limit set by the word ‘until’ has been reached, those others called ‘the rest’ shall ‘live again’.

The revised text reads, ‘stand before the throne’ instead of ‘before God’ in Revelation 20:12, and this reading is followed by J.N. Darby., Rotherham, The Companion Bible, as well as the Revised Version. We know from other Scriptures that ‘He Who sits on that throne’ is none other than Christ:

‘For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father’ (John 5:22,23).

‘Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained’ (Acts 17:31).

It is important to notice the character of this judgment. The word ‘sin’ is not mentioned. This is covered by the death of Christ. Sin entered the world by one man, Adam. It involved all in its consequence — death. But the Scriptures as emphatically affirm that there is a perfect parallel between Adam and Christ, and that:

‘As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life’ (Rom. 5:18).

If any should object to our words ‘a perfect parallel’ we will agree that the parallel is not perfect, that throughout
Paul's argument in Romans 5 the grace of God in Christ is 'not as it was by one that sinned', but that continually we must say when speaking of the grace of God 'much more'. For Christ not only died for 'sin', but in the case of all those who received the abundance of grace, He shed His blood on account of their 'sins' also, and consequently 'no condemnation' can be theirs. This is not the case with 'the rest of the dead'. The 'sin' that was theirs in common with 'all in Adam' has been put away, and the death that ensued has been revoked. There is for them a 'justification of life'. These however never knew the forgiveness of 'sins' (is there a passage anywhere in the New Testament that speaks of the forgiveness of 'sin'? ) and they are here found standing before the throne to hear the judgment of God concerning their works.

Our attention is most particularly drawn to the presence of two sets of books which are to be opened at this great judgment:

'And the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works' (Rev. 20:12).

Whoever undertakes to interpret this passage ignoring this most important distinction, thereby stamps himself as an untrustworthy expositor. Judgment is out of the books, not out of the book. The judgment of the Great White Throne is a judgment upon works. Further, there is no word 'wrath' in the record of this solemn judgment. The vials of wrath poured out by the seven angels completed the wrath of God. This is the testimony of Scripture, and J.N. Darby, thus translates Revelation 15:1, 'For in them the fury of God is completed'. Rotherham reads 'ended', the Revised Version 'finished'. It is not for us to theorize, but it is for us to adhere faithfully to the word of truth. There are two words rendered 'wrath' in Revelation, thumos and orge, and they both terminate with the conclusion of the seven vials. The last reference to thumos is Revelation 18:3, where Babylon is in view, and the last
reference to orge is at Armageddon (Rev. 19:15). We do not believe a single Israelite will stand before the Great White Throne, for Israel being an elect nation were saved by Christ, and the judgment of their works falls within the millennium. We must be guided by the Word however, and remember that ‘They are not all Israel that are of Israel’, for even in that elect race the holy seed had become corrupted, and some in our Lord’s day who were lineal descendants of Abraham were nevertheless said to be ‘of their father the Devil’ (John 8:44). With that one reservation we can boldly say ‘And so all Israel shall be saved’ (Rom. 11:26). There will not stand before that throne one of any dispensation from Adam onwards who has walked by faith. ‘The rest of the dead’ includes that great company of Adam’s sons, who were not elected to any of the companies of faith, and who never attained either by award (Matt. 19:16), fruit (Rom. 6:22), or faith (John 3:16), to the life of the age that had then gone by, usually translated ‘everlasting life’, and made parallel with the kingdom (Matt. 25:34 and 46).

Tyre and Sidon and Sodom (Matt. 11:21-24) shall find it ‘more tolerable’ than some who on the surface were nothing near so vile. We have it upon no less authority than that of the living God Himself that Sodom was ‘more righteous’ than Israel:

‘As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters ... they are more righteous than thou ... thou hast justified thy sisters’ (Ezek. 16:48-52).

Just as the enormity of Israel’s sin ‘justified’ Sodom, so we read that Nineveh’s repentance ‘condemns’ Israel:

‘The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it’ (Matt. 12:41).

It is not possible for any human judge to deal with a man upon the ground of what he would have done under altered circumstances — the whole world would cry out against such an administration. But He Who sits upon the Great White Throne is One Who ‘tries the reins and the
heart’. He knows what Sodom or Tyre would have done if the favours shown to Chorazin and Bethsaida had been shown to them. He alone can judge the ‘secrets of men’, and that ‘according to my gospel’ says Paul (Rom. 2:16). Paul’s gospel touches *Adam* and *sin*, no other gospel goes so far back nor so deep. It is quite apart from all the lurid pictures of orthodoxy to think of a gospel in association with the Great White Throne, but we nevertheless believe that such is the case.

After the judgment according to works has been given we read:

‘And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death (even the lake of fire)’ (Rev. 20:14).

Death and ‘gravedom’ (*hades*), together with the present heavens and earth, have accomplished their end. Like all other things that are temporal or cause offence, they are destroyed before the kingdom of righteousness can be set up. By no conceivable interpretation can we understand that God’s intention is to preserve or to change death and the grave by casting them into the lake of fire. Death, so far as it may be spoken of as a state, has been destroyed by the resurrection of all the rest of the dead. So far as it may be spoken of as an enemy it is here seen to be destroyed in the lake of fire.

The book of life is now put into operation, and this book alone is connected with the second death. No man will ever enter the second death as a result of judgment according to his works. It would be to ascribe most unbecoming trifling to the Lord Jesus, to say that it would be more tolerable for one company who are cast into the second death than for another. The word ‘whosoever’ in Revelation 20:15 is apt to mislead the English reader. *Kai ei tis* can only be translated ‘and if anyone’, and the words are so rendered by the *Revised Version*. We now leave the great multitude for the individual. A mistaken zeal often prompts the evangelist to declare: ‘If any one stands before the Great White Throne he is necessarily doomed.
Nothing but the lake of fire which burneth with fire and brimstone can be his lot. Flee from the wrath to come!

These words contain serious mistakes. The second death is not the period spoken of in Scripture as 'the wrath to come'. The day of wrath has peculiar reference to Babylonianism, Antichrist, etc. (see Rom. 1 and Revelation). 'Wrath' does not occur in the inner part of Romans, namely, 5:12 to 8:39. It is not true to say that to stand before the Great White Throne is just the same as being condemned to the lake of fire.

'If any one' denies that. None shall go into the lake of fire unless his name shall not be found in the book of life. This book of life was written 'from the overthrow of the world'. The translation that we believe to be the true one of Revelation 13:8 is:

'And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, everyone whose name hath not been written from the overthrowing of the world in the book of the life of the slain Lamb' (Rev. 13:8 author's translation).

When Satan's rebellion brought about the 'overthrow' of Genesis 1:2, and the purpose of the ages was put into movement, a second heavens and earth were made (which were to pass away when their purpose was accomplished), and a people were written in the book of life. Sin entering brought the first death, and sin brought punishment, but the ultimate destiny of this people of purpose had no reference either to Adam's one sin or their own many sins. The consequences, both of the one offence and of the many offences, were undertaken by Christ, and in accordance with the outworking of the purpose of the ages, different companies were called to a saving knowledge of the truth. At length the last company is reached. They, too, suffer for their works, or are rewarded as the case may be, and being found in the book of life, pass into the new heavens and the new earth for the final movement in the great age purpose. There are some, however, whose names, apparently, will not be found therein. Can we find anything in Scripture to help us understand this omission?
Turning once more to Revelation 13:8, let us notice what it says of those whose names had not been written in the book of life:

‘And all that dwell upon the earth, everyone whose name hath not been written in the book of life of the slain Lamb, SHALL WORSHIP HIM (i.e., the beast)’ (Rev. 13:8 author’s translation).

Terrific judgments are pronounced against such in Revelation 14:10,11. A promise is made to the overcomer in Revelation 3:5, that the Lord will in no wise (double negative) blot out his name from the book of life.

These two passages raise certain questions concerning the book of life that must be faced:

1. Revelation 13:8 indicates that the worshippers of the beast are those who have not their names in that book. There will be a company therefore on earth who are not reckoned in the great transaction of Adam and Christ; in other words, we perceive some of the false seed who are of ‘their father the Devil’.

2. The promise not to blot out the name of the overcomer suggests that there may be some point in the life even of one of the true children of Adam where such an awful thing may take place.

We are reminded of the words of Moses in Exodus 32:32,33:

‘And if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written. And the L ORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book’.

We must, however, be careful to note that this does not say ‘the book of life’, and may refer to other things. In Psalm 69:28 we read:

‘Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous’.

Rotherham, in a footnote, says, ‘Or list (or register) of the living’, and it is by no means certain that the Psalmist has ‘the book of life of the Lamb’ in mind. The expression is parallel with ‘the land of the living’ (Psa. 52:5 and Isa. 53:8). It should be read with Psalm 37:29:

‘The righteous shall inherit the earth, and they may settle down to futurity (Heb. ad) thereupon’ (Author’s translation).
We can be certain that the names of those who worship the beast as recorded in Revelation 13:8 are not written in the Lamb's book of life. Whether anyone whose name is in that book can possibly commit such an act and so take the side of Satan, is more than we can say. Enough for our purpose to understand that the second death is the end of those whose names are not in the book of life.

We do not read 'the book of aionion life', neither do we read of 'the book of glory', or 'blessing', or 'peace', or 'victory', or 'holiness'. All these other aspects of the future will have been settled. One issue, and one issue only remains. Life or death. The second death is the only alternative. It cannot mean purgatory, it cannot be a place of reformation, it is not a place of torment. Where the lake of fire is used as a place of torment it is before the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:10), and the lake of fire is described as either a place of torment or the second death, never both.

Before the righteous can shine forth in the kingdom of the Father, the 'tares', 'the children of the wicked one', the 'false seed' must be destroyed. The figure used to describe the end of the children of the wicked one is taken from agriculture. Every man who cultivates the ground knows the necessity and the purpose of the annual bonfire. The weeds are raked together into a heap, and a fire is kindled in order that he may be rid of them. If anyone should venture to suggest that he entertained a hope that by means of the fire some of the thistles would reform and become figs, the gardener would rightly put such a one down as mad. Now the figure taken from husbandry was taken by the Lord to illustrate, and if the gathering of the bundles of tares (the children of the Devil) to be burned is not to destroy them, then the Lord has misled us!:

'They shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend ... then shall the righteous shine ...' (Matt. 13:41-43).

We have no warrant for believing that either Satan, the Beast, the False Prophet, the Angels that fell with Satan, or
his monstrous seed sown in the earth to corrupt the true seed of the woman, ever have had their names in the book of life. These, together with death and the grave, are consumed in the second death.

The platform has now been prepared. All is ready for the last great act which is ushered in by the coming of the new heavens and new earth. These John beholds immediately following the lake of fire. This exact sequence is preserved in 2 Peter 3 where the Day of the Lord eventuates in the burning up of the heavens and the earth, and which in turn is followed by the Day of God. This fixes for us the lake of fire. It is the great dissolving and destroying agency at the end.
CHAPTER 16
All Things New
Revelation 21 and 22

The Scriptures are divided into three great sections, namely:

(1) The heaven and the earth which were created. ‘In the
beginning’ (Gen. 1:1).

(2) The heavens and the earth which were created during the six
days. ‘Which are now’ (Gen. 1:3 to 2:3; 2 Pet. 3:7).

(3) The new heaven and new earth (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1).

One constant factor throughout the second division is
the presence of sin. During the ages which span this
section, the wondrous purposes of grace and redemption
are worked out. The last act which pertains to this section
is that of casting death and hades into the lake of fire. The
millennium is the Day of the Lord (2 Pet. 3:10), and this is
followed by the Day of God (verse 12). For this the
believer ‘looks and hastens unto’, ‘looking according to
His promise, for new heavens and a new earth, wherein
dwelleth righteousness’ (verse 13). The section therefore
which now claims our attention, though brief, is of
stupendous significance. It is nothing less than the goal of
the ages, the fruit of redemption, and the triumph of truth.

The subject ‘the new heaven and new earth’ occupies
chapter 21:1 to 22:5. First we have a brief statement
occupying 21:1-5, then, secondly, we have an expansion of
one aspect of the subject which has particular connection
with the theme of the Revelation. It is important to a right
understanding that we have this arrangement of the subject
clearly before us.
The new creation and its heirs

$A_1$ 21:1-5. All things new.
$A_2$ 21:6 to 22:5. These things inherited.

The first part of the subject is general — 'all things'. The second part of the same subject is that which is peculiar to the overcomer — 'he that overcometh shall inherit these things'. Five verses are sufficient to tell of the new heavens and new earth, while twenty-seven verses are taken up with the description of the inheritance of the overcomer. Let us consider these separate groups.

'All things new' (Rev. 21:1-5)

A a 1.- New heaven. New earth.
   b -1.- Former heaven and earth pass away.
   c -1. No more sea.
B 2. The Holy City.
B 3. The Tabernacle.
A c 4.- No more death.
   b -4.- Former things pass away.
   a 5. All things new.

So complete is the change that takes place that the Scripture repeats, in order to emphasize, that 'the former heaven and earth' and the 'former things' pass away. In Isaiah 65:17 we read:

'For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind (upon the heart)'.

Just as the passing of the old heavens and earth is vitally connected with the 'former things' in Revelation 21, so in Isaiah 65:16, for we read:

'The former troubles are forgotten ... they are hid from Mine eyes'.

Further, there is no more sea in that new earth, which is balanced by the statement that there shall be no more death, sorrow, crying or pain. Now why should the sea be associated with death? In exactly the same way that the
'former heaven and earth' are associated with the 'former troubles'. The sea here refers to 'the deep' of Genesis 1:2.

Seeing that we have reached in this chapter the great cosmic change, the goal towards which creation and redemption have pressed, it is not to be wondered at if sin is viewed, not from an individual point of view, nor even from a racial and federal point of view; it is seen rather as the primal sin that caused the overthrow of the world, made the present creation necessary, and which is behind all sin in general and 'Mystery Babylon' in particular.

With the repeated emphasis upon the passing away of former things, and the complete cessation of death, it is simple to believe that all who were cast into the lake of fire suffer destruction, that they become 'no more' even as the sea, death and sorrow, that they have passed away as completely as the former heaven and earth. To believe that a countless mass of unsaved humanity will still suffer torment contradicts these plain words, as does also the other teaching that the second death is in some measure a purgatory or place of temporary detention.

We look in vain in this chapter of Revelation for any further description of the new heaven, and new earth. Immediately following the briefest of introductions, John focuses upon one phase of this new world:

'And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband' (Rev. 21:2).

Again a pause, and a further expansion:

The city is named New Jerusalem.
The city is located Coming down from heaven.
The city is likened Prepared as a bride.

Here the description ceases. Presently the theme is resumed with a wealth of detail, but in the brief summary which prefaces this section the above suffices. John 'saw' the city. He also 'heard' a great voice out of heaven saying:
'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God' (Rev. 21:3).

This is an evident explanation of the purpose of the new Jerusalem. It is to be in reality what the tabernacle was to Israel in type. It was further to be for 'men', whereas the tabernacle was exclusive to Israel. At the close of the description (22:1-5) we reach Eden, paradise restored. It will be seen therefore that there are to be a series of steps ever back to 'as it was in the beginning'.

(1) **THE MILLENNIUM.**— Jerusalem on earth, a holy city. Special feature THE TEMPLE (Ezek. 40 to 47).

(2) **THE NEW HEAVEN.**— Jerusalem, heavenly city. Special feature THE TABERNACLE.

(3) **THE NEW EARTH.**— Paradise. The day of the age (2 Pet. 3:18 lit.). Special feature THE TREE OF LIFE.

We have already suggested that the new Jerusalem is closely associated with the 'overcomer', and a glance back to some of the promises in Revelation 2 and 3, will show that some of them are not fulfilled until after the millennium:

'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God' (Rev. 2:7).

'He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death' (Rev. 2:11).

'He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life' (Rev. 3:5).

'Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is **new Jerusalem**, which cometh down out of heaven from My God' (Rev. 3:12).

In these four passages, we have four items that are connected with our subject:
(1) The paradise of God.
(2) The second death.
(3) The book of life.
(4) The city of God.

It will be found that Nos. 2 and 3 are indicated in chapter 21:8 and 27, where the two statements ‘the second death’ and ‘the book of life’ are mentioned in connection with the new Jerusalem.

The very close resemblance between the tabernacle and the city becomes evident upon examination. The materials for the tabernacle are given in Exodus 25:1-7, and they are gold, silver, brass, blue, purple, scarlet, precious stones, etc. The breastplate of the high priest contained twelve precious stones. These closely resemble the twelve precious stones with which the foundations of the wall were garnished. There is also an intended contrast with Babylon. In Revelation 17 and 18 we have the mystery of iniquity and there we read of purple and scarlet, gold and precious stones and pearls in the description of the harlot, and among the merchandise of that great city we find gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet. Again in the description of the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28:12-19) who sets forth in symbol Satan, we have a description which includes ‘every precious stone’, and nine precious stones are mentioned by name.

The great city, Babylon, falls to rise no more; the great city, new Jerusalem, manifests the triumphant conclusion of the conflict of the ages.

We may observe here that one feature of the tabernacle which is given first place in Exodus 25 is the one feature mentioned in Revelation 21.

Exodus 25:8.— ‘Let them make Me a Sanctuary; that I may dwell among them’.

Revelation 21:3.— ‘The Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them’ (See also Ezek. 43:7; Zech. 2:10; 8:3).
Another important item is brought to mind by these parallels. The references to Zechariah and Ezekiel are millennial and to Israel, whereas the reference in Revelation 21 is beyond the millennium and is to ‘men’ and not to Israel alone. The new heaven and the new earth together with the heavenly Jerusalem will be anticipated in the millennium in Israel and the Jerusalem that will be built according to the prophecy of Ezekiel 40 to 47.

Isaiah mentions the new heavens and new earth in connection with Israel, the millennium and the Jerusalem of that day, and unless the typical and anticipatory character of Israel’s history be remembered, a great difficulty will be experienced in placing these passages. They are Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22:

‘For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind (upon the heart). But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy ... and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying’ (Isa. 65:17-19).

Yet this cannot be the same as Revelation 21, for the next verse speaks of a sinner dying an hundred years old, and being accursed, whereas in the new earth of Revelation 21 there is no more death, and in Revelation 22 no more curse.

In Isaiah 66 the new heavens and earth are connected with Israel, and the carcasses of men shall be seen in Gehenna, and be an abhorring unto all flesh.

There is one more item given in Revelation 21 upon the nature of the new creation, which though briefly stated is infinitely precious:

‘And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death’ (Rev. 21:4).

When God wipes away all tears, it indicates that death has been vanquished:

‘He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces’ (Isa. 25:8).
There shall not enter into the new heavens or earth any who do not stand in new life in Christ.

We must now pass on to the more detailed description of the new Jerusalem, which commences at Revelation 21:9. The intervening verses (4–8) form a transition:

'And He said (the One that sitteth upon the throne), Behold, I make all things new.
'And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.
'And He said, It is done' (Rev. 21:5,6).

Some authorities read 'they have been accomplished', but the sense of fulfilment remains unaltered. The word gegone, 'it is done', is the word that was uttered as the last vial of wrath was poured out 'and great Babylon came into remembrance before God'. At this utterance 'every island fled away, and (certain)* mountains were not found; and there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven' (Rev. 16:17–21). Here we see the great contrast.

It is done.— Judgment.
The great city, Babylon.
Precious stones, pearls and gold.
No more harper, candle or rejoicing.
The habitation of demons, foul spirits.
Islands flee, mountains not found.
The harlot.
Kings of the earth corrupted.
Nations made drunk.

It is done.— Blessing.
The great city, new Jerusalem.
Precious stones, pearls and gold.
No more death, sorrow or curse.
Nothing that defileth.
Earth and heaven flee away.
The bride.
Kings of the earth bring glory.
Nations walk in light.

*Dr. E.W. Bullinger writes in The Apocalypse or The Day of the Lord, page 492: 'There is no article before mountains, so we have supplied its absence by the word "certain". Had every mountain been meant the article would have been used. Mountains will exist during the millennium. (See Isa. 2:2; 44:23).
The reader may lengthen this list; we have given enough to show the evident contrast between the two cities and the two conflicting purposes that attach to them. The mystery of iniquity ends in destruction utter and complete, the mystery of godliness ends in glory beyond description.

Who is it that sits upon this throne? Who is it that says, 'Behold, I make all things new'? Who is it that says, 'It is done'?

'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end' (Rev. 21:6).

This title has occurred in Revelation before, namely, in Revelation 1:8. There it is shown to be parallel with the great name Jehovah, and the Almighty:

'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty' (Rev. 1:8).

It is also closely associated with death and resurrection:

'Fear not, I am the first and the last; I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for the ages of the ages, Amen; and have the keys of hades and of death' (Rev. 1:17,18 author's translation).

Or again:

'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God' (Rev. 3:14).

Both Alpha and Omega are vowels. A vowel is required to form a complete sound. Without Christ the promises of God can never be fulfilled, but with Him every jot and tittle shall be accomplished. He Who bowed His head upon the cross crying, 'It is finished', shall one day sit upon the throne and say 'It is done'.

One blessed promise is given here:

'I will give unto him that is athirst (thirsteth) of the fountain of the water of life freely' (Rev. 21:6).

At first sight this seems no more than that of:

'A pure river of water of life' (Rev. 22:1), or

'Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (Rev. 22:17).
A moment's consideration, however, will reveal a difference. First we have 'the fountain'. Secondly we have 'the river', and thirdly we have 'the water' without reference to either river or fountain.

Now in Revelation 7:17 we have a millennial anticipation by the overcomers of this same blessed promise:

'The Lamb ... shall lead them unto living fountains of waters (fountains of waters of life R.V.); and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes' (Rev. 7:17).

We read in Jeremiah 2:13 that the Lord Himself is 'the fountain of living waters', and the promise of Revelation 21:6 takes the overcomer to the very source of that pure river which flows out from the throne to water the paradise of God. It is an 'overcomer's' portion, and not that of 'whosoever will'. This promise is immediately followed by the words 'He that overcometh shall inherit these things' (tawtaw, these things, instead of panta, all things see R.V.). There is no practical difference between 'all things' and 'these things' in this passage, for 'these things' must refer to something stated in the context, which seems to be all things that are made new.

An inheritance, in the Scriptures, seems to have a twofold significance. There is the inheritance that is associated with birth, and the inheritance that is associated with merit. Christ was appointed 'heir of all things' (Heb. 1:2), but there seems an added feature in the statement, 'He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name' (Heb. 1:4). So with Abraham: 'When he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed' (Heb. 11:8). This inheritance doubtless was the land of Palestine, but it included more. Isaac and Jacob were heirs together with Abraham of the same promise, and dwelt in tents as sojourners in a strange country:

'For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God ... They desire a better country, that is, an heavenly ... He hath prepared for them a city' (Heb. 11:10-16).
The inheritance spoken of therefore in Revelation 21 looks to the new Jerusalem in particular for its fulfilment and enjoyment.

In severe and awful contrast with the overcomers are placed throughout the Revelation those who receive the mark of the beast or the number of his name. Their characteristics are given in verses 8 and 27. The last word in these two lists is connected with the lie.

‘All liars’ (Rev. 21:8). ‘Whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie’ (Rev. 21:27).

If we are to take the words ‘all liars’ in an unrestricted sense it would include every son of Adam. There is something in this term that is specific, it is associated with making ‘abomination’ or making ‘a lie’. It refers to complicity with the great Antichristian system of which Satan is ‘the father’:

‘He is a liar, and the father of it’ (John 8:44).

This lie usurped the place of the truth of God, when the Gentile world became submerged in idolatry (Rom. 1:23-25), and will finally obsess the worshippers of the man of sin and his ‘lying wonders’ (2 Thess. 2:9-11). This basic lie is connected with specific murder (John 8:44; 1 John 3:12), and with abominations (Rom. 1:26, Rev. 2:20, etc.). With this dreadful company are joined ‘the fearful’, and ‘the unbelieving’ (Rev. 21:8), which we understand also in the same restricted sense, otherwise the very apostles must come under this awful doom (see the same word used of them, Matt. 8:26).

Abraham looked for a ‘city which had foundations’ and a ‘heavenly country’, and these are now to be described with a wealth of detail. One of the seven angels who had been instrumental in the destruction of Babylon comes forward and says to John:

‘Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God’ (Rev. 21:9,10).
There is an evident parallel with Revelation 17 here:

'And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters ... so he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman ... the woman which thou sawest is that great city ...' (Rev. 17:1-18).

Once again we shall find that the millennial city foreshadows the heavenly Jerusalem:

'In the visions of God brought He me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south' (Ezek. 40:2).

The word 'wife' is gune, a word which is translated 'woman' in the Authorized Version 129 times, 17 of the occurrences being found in the Revelation. Gune is translated 'wife' 92 times, two of these occurrences being found in the Revelation. Like the word aner, which means both husband and man (see 'the perfect man' Eph. 4:13), so gune means any woman who is of marriageable age, as well as a wife.

To make a distinction between the Lamb’s wife in Revelation 19 and the bride of the Lamb in 21 seems to be artificial by the very fact that the Lamb’s bride must be His wife:

'I will shew thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb' (Rev. 21:9 author’s translation).

Are we to believe that the marriage consummated in Revelation 19 is dissolved by either divorce or death at the end of the millennium? No one can believe that the Lamb of God will even in type and symbol break the law of God concerning marriage and practise polygamy. It was customary for a wedding ceremony to cover a period of seven days. ‘Fulfil her week’ (Gen. 29:27) refers to this period. So also from Judges 14:17,18, we gather the same thing. The marriage festivities of the Lamb last for a longer period, how long we do not know, but after the end of the millennium, when the new heaven and earth appear,
the holy city descends from heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and it is then that the bride is called the Lamb's wife.

There are several references in the Old Testament to Israel as a wife, a wife divorced and taken back again, which must not be ignored if we would have the truth.

Another passage to be noted is Hosea 2:16-23, where we read 'Thou shalt call Me my husband ... and I will betroth thee unto Me for ever', or yet again, Jeremiah 3:14, 'Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you'.

The simple solution seems to be to keep distinct the titles of the Lord, as (1) The God of Israel, and (2) The Lamb, God manifest in the flesh; the restoration of the nation of Israel being one thing, the inheritance of the new Jerusalem being another. 'If children, then heirs, heirs of God', that is one position. 'Joint-heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with Him' (Rom. 8:17), that is another, and is somewhat parallel to the case before us.

Let us now read the description of this wondrous city:

'He shewed me the great city, holy Jerusalem ... having the glory of God' (Rev. 21:10,11).

The glory of God is a theme that requires separate treatment, and we must content ourselves here with pointing out a few outstanding features:

(1) The glory of God is directly attacked by the Babylonian system that 'flooded the earth with idolatry' (Rom. 1:23).

(2) Sin causes all to come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

(3) Only by virtue of redemption may any therefore entertain the hope of the glory of God (Rom. 5:2).

(4) Immediately following the rebellion of Babel 'the God of glory' called Abram out of Chaldea (Acts 7:2).

(5) The glory of God is vitally connected with resurrection:

(a) Christ was raised from the dead 'by the glory of the Father' (Rom. 6:4).
(b) At the tomb of Lazarus, the Lord said in connection with the raising of Lazarus, 'Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?' (John 11:40).

We may at least see in the new Jerusalem these five elements:

(a) The Babylonian attack has perished for ever;
(b) Sin has passed away;
(c) Former things have passed away;
(d) Redemption is the foundation upon which this city rests; and
(e) Resurrection life is its animating principle.

This glory is said to be, not 'her light', but 'her luminary' (phoster). There was no need in this city for the light of either sun or moon. The wall is 'great and high', and there are twelve gates, with twelve angels, the names of the twelve tribes of Israel being inscribed on the gates. Verse 21 adds the information that each gate was a pearl.

The superstructure of the wall is of jasper (verse 18), but the wall rests upon twelve foundations, bearing the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. With the exception of Matthias, no doubt is entertained concerning the names of the remaining eleven. We have given our reasons in The Berean Expositor vol. 13, p. 81, for believing that Matthias is the twelfth apostle; and in expositions upon Ephesians the peculiar position of the apostle Paul is considered. It is our firm belief that the name of Paul will not be found upon the foundations of the new Jerusalem, also that Paul is not one of the apostles of 'the Lamb'.

The measurements of the city are given and must be received, and nothing we can write will be of any service beyond stating that we must accept the explanation as a matter of fact. It is possible that the shape of this city is that of a pyramid, which would be in harmony with the archaeological evidences of early Babylonian buildings.
Near to the ruins of Babylon is a huge mound which is called Birs-Nimrud, or the tower of Nimrod:

'It covers a square surface of 49,000 feet, and is nearly 300 feet high ... Herodotus saw it while it still retained something of its ancient glories'.

He describes it as being constructed of a series of eight towers, with a way running spirally around them. Nebuchadnezzar leaves a record to the effect that he restored this tower, using different coloured tiles for each stage of the building (see The Berean Expositor, vol. 5, p. 30, or vol. 4/5 p. 130). This seems to be Satan’s anticipation and travesty of the glorious colours of the new Jerusalem.

It is somewhat difficult to decide whether the word 'building' in verse 18 means the superstructure, as some translate it, or the buttresses, as others suggest. It is evidently something different from the foundations themselves, as one could scarcely adorn jasper with jasper. Those who have opportunity may find in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, the twelve stones mentioned in this description. We do not think any spiritual good can come by a lengthy description; most have some fair knowledge of their general appearance, and when we do see this vision of beauty we shall doubtless say, ‘the half was not told me’.

During the millennium there will be the glorious temple described with such minuteness by Ezekiel (in chapters 40 to 47), but the greater glory of the new Jerusalem is that it needs no temple:

‘And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it’ (Rev. 21:22).

While temples, altars, sacrifices and priests stand, full access is denied (see Heb. 9:8,9; 10:19-22 for the principle). During the millennium:

‘Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold’ (Isa. 30:26),
but of the city of Jerusalem itself we read:

"The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory" (Isa. 60:19,20).

This is but another anticipation of the heavenly city:

"And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, that they should shine on her; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. 21:23 author's translation).

Future blessedness in the minds of many is somewhat nebulous. They imagine an immaterial state, with nothing much to do except to sing. The new earth at least presents a very different aspect. There are nations there and kings, "and the nations shall walk by means of her light", which is but following out the anticipation of the millennial city:

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee ... and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 60:1-3).

"Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day or night; that men may bring unto thee the forces (wealth) of the nations, and that their kings may be brought (conducted through)" (Isa. 60:11).

The kings of the earth were ruined by Babylon, the nations were made drunk by the harlot, but the nations shall walk by the light of Jerusalem earthly and heavenly, and kings shall be blessed by her.

The concluding words regarding this city are those which repeat the solemn witness of verse 8:

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27).

The city is likened to the tabernacle. The ritual of the tabernacle impresses us with the need for cleansing. The leper, being unclean, or any who had contracted defilement, was not allowed to come near until his defilement had been removed. The provision for the removal of sin and uncleanness is found in the blood of Christ. This had been rejected by those who were cast into
the second death. There remaineth no more offering for sin. Christ dieth no more.

Throughout the record of chapter 21 illumination is found in the story of Israel. This principle of interpretation which looks to the typical people of Israel to supply the correct grounds for interpreting the unfolding of the purpose of the ages we commend to our readers, who will find much more than we have brought forward here that will make the vision plain.

We now arrive at the last members of the great structure which comprises the purpose of the ages, and are brought not to Israel nor Jerusalem, but back to Eden and paradise. Revelation 2:7 gives us warrant to use the word paradise of Revelation 22:1-5. Genesis speaks of the garden planted by the Lord with its rivers and its trees of fruit and its tree of life. The picture is revived in this closing section. Ezekiel 47 provides a millennial anticipation of this river of living water. Its healing power is brought before us by a physical and geographical fact:

"These waters issue out towards the east country (used of the Jordan, Josh. 22:11), and go down into the desert (or plain), and go into the sea (that is the Dead Sea): which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed" (Ezek. 47:8).

Is not this a blessed symbol? In verse 12 we read of the fruit trees with similar characteristics and virtues as those of Revelation 22.

The leaves of the tree are for healing the nations, not for those who have the right of entry into that city. We are, however, not to suppose that sin or death is at work among the nations, for the Scripture immediately adds, 'And there shall be no longer any curse', even as there shall be no longer any night, nor death, or crying.

There in that renewed paradise shall be the throne of God and the Lamb, there His servants shall serve Him and see His face, bearing His name upon their foreheads. Basking in the light that the Lord God Himself shall give, they shall reign unto the ages of the ages. This is the
farthest point to which the book takes us in the outworking of the great purpose of God. One by one the barriers are broken down. The last to go here is the temple with its priesthood. Paul places the top stone upon the edifice by revealing that when the reign of Christ has brought everything into line and order, the goal of the ages will then be reached and God shall be all in all (1 Cor. 15:25-28).

The remaining verses of chapter 22 form the epilogue or conclusion of the book. The conclusion has much in common with the introduction, and goes back to its time setting.

We have the coming of Christ mentioned or suggested in the chapter at least four times:

‘Behold, I come quickly’ (Rev. 22:7).
‘Behold, I come quickly’ (Rev. 22:12).
‘The bright and morning star’ (Rev. 22:16).
‘Surely I come quickly’ (Rev. 22:20).

A blessing is pronounced upon those who keep the words of the prophecy of this book (verse 7), while severe judgment is threatened to any who shall either add to or take away from these prophetic words (verses 18,19).

John sees the Lord, not only as the root and offspring of David, but as the bright and morning Star. From the dark night of sin and sorrow ascends to the Lord the bright harbinger of everlasting day, the one word come, ‘He who testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly’.

As we review the black night of tribulation that casts its gloom over this book, as we see the persecution of the saints, the mark of the beast, the worship of the dragon, our hearts unite with that of John in response to this word of promise. AMEN. EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS:
‘Oh what a bright and blessed world
This groaning earth of ours will be,
When from its throne the tempter hurled
Shall leave it all, O Lord, to Thee’.

‘The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints, Amen’.

A note on the measurements of the New Jerusalem

After this series of studies in The Revelation was concluded in the May number of The Berean Expositor for 1925 (vol. 15, p. 142), Mr. Welch wrote:

Since that date we have received a copy of ‘THE FAITH’ for May-June 1925, which contains so helpful an explanation of the measurements of the new Jerusalem, that we feel we must pass on the gist of the article to our readers.

Our own attitude toward the subject may be gathered from page 415 of the present Volume:

“The measurements of the city are given, and must be received, and nothing we can write will be of any service beyond stating that we must accept the explanation as a matter of fact”.

The reader doubtless gathered that we desired to bow to the teaching of Scripture, but that we had no clear understanding what the Scripture really intended to teach. The passage in question is Revelation 21:16,17:

‘And the city lieth foursquare, and its length is as great as its breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, 12,000 furlongs (stadia). The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, 144 cubits’.

Dr. E.W. Bullinger in his Apocalypse says, ‘In this case the city will be 1,500 miles high’, and referring to another computation which takes the 12,000 furlongs as being the measurement of the circumference, he says, ‘Is 375 miles high easier to believe than 1,500?’ and we must confess that either measurement presents a great problem.
The suggestion made by the writer of the article in ‘The Faith’ is that the 12,000 furlongs is the area of the square base. The square root of 12,000 is 109, which taking the stadium as being equal to 582 feet (see Twentieth Century Dictionary) gives about 12 miles for the length of one of the square sides. By comparing this dimension with that given in Ezekiel 48:35, ‘round about eighteen thousand measures’, we get helpful confirmation. The measure here is a ‘reed’, and measures ‘six great cubits’.

The sacred cubit is given by some as 25 inches, which gives 46 miles for the circumference of the city. Divided by four this gives 11 and a half miles for the one side, which is very near to the 12 miles suggested above, especially if an outer wall had to be reckoned in addition. The height of the wall 144 cubits, or 100 yards, is proportionate to a city twelve miles in height, but is not so obviously proportional to either 1,500 or 375 miles.

While we are prepared to believe that the new Jerusalem will be 1,500 miles in height, length and breadth if Scripture reveals such to be the case, we realize that it is not an act of faith nor is it to the glory of God to be merely credulous. A city twelve miles square is a reasonable proposition, and twelve miles in height would give it worldwide domination. We cannot see that any liberties have been taken with the text in arriving at this interpretation, and we therefore feel that our readers should have the benefit of it.

We tender our hearty thanks to the Editor of ‘The Faith’ for this suggestive article.
Appendix 1

Concerning page 177 and whether Jairus’ daughter was dead, as her family thought, or was asleep

On further study of the Scriptures, Charles Welch discovered that Jairus’ daughter was asleep, and not dead as he originally thought in 1912.

We quote from *An Alphabetical Analysis*, part 7, pp. 250-252 in the 1963 printing, and pp. 287-290 in the 2003 printing:

In the first place let us turn to John 11:14, ‘Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead’ (*Lazaros apethanen*). The Greek verb here translated ‘is dead’ is from *apothnesko*. As John 11:21 and 41 will show, the word *thnesko* means ‘to die’. The addition of the prefix *apo* intensifies the conception representing the actions of the simple verb as consummated and finished, ‘to die out, expire, become quite dead’ (Dr. E. W. Bullinger’s *Lexicon*). In John 8:52 we read: ‘Abraham is dead’ (*Abraham apethanen*). Here, therefore, is fact one. Lazarus was dead, as literally and completely as Abraham.

In the second place let us turn to Luke 8:52. There we read: ‘She is not dead’ (Greek *ouk apethanen*). Here we have the negative ‘not’, which sets before us the exact opposite of the proposition made in John 11. Here, therefore, is fact two. ‘She is not dead’.

Now we find that many use the words of Luke 8:52 to deny or belittle the language of John 11:14, but by so doing they are making Christ contradict Christ, which is impossible. The third fact, therefore, which emerges, and which demands acceptance, is, that Lazarus was dead and the little maid was *not*; both statements must be accepted, and neither contradicts the other.

In the fourth place, we are reminded that in both passages the word ‘sleep’ occurs, and this is brought forward as a proof that Lazarus was not really dead. But
when we ‘open the Book’ and ‘search and see’ we discover that this ‘proof’ is based on the supposition that the Greek word for ‘sleep’ in both passages is identical. This, however, is not the case:

‘Our friend Lazarus sleepeth’, Greek koimaomai (John 11:11).
‘She is not dead, but sleepeth’, Greek katheudo (Luke 8:52).

These two words represent two distinct thoughts; they are used with purpose, and recorded by inspiration of God. Those who desire the truth will adhere to the words that the Lord chose; those who wish otherwise will probably pay little or no attention to the essential difference between them. The word in John 11:11 is used in the passive and means ‘to fall asleep involuntarily’, consequently it is used of death. The word in Luke 8:52 is active, and means ‘to compose oneself to sleep’. A good illustration of the essential difference between the two words occurs in the first epistle to the Thessalonians. In 4:13-15 we read of them which ‘sleep’, and these believers are spoken of as ‘them which sleep in Jesus’ (verse 14) and ‘the dead in Christ’ (verse 16). Moreover these are contrasted with those who are ‘alive and remain’. In these passages the word consistently used is koimaomai, for this ‘sleep’ means death.

In 1 Thessalonians 5, however, kaiheudo is used, and not koimaomai:

‘Let us not sleep, as do others’ (1 Thess. 5:6).
‘They that sleep sleep in the night’ (1 Thess. 5:7).
‘Whether we wake or sleep’ (1 Thess. 5:10).

Were the word ‘sleep’ here synonymous with death, we should be able to restate verse 6 as follows: ‘Therefore let us not die as do others’! but, alas, we have no such option. The word ‘sleep’ finds its synonym, not in death, but in ‘drunkenness’, its contrast in being ‘sober’.

The reader of the A.V. should remember that the words ‘watch’ in 1 Thessalonians 5:6 and ‘wake’ in verse 10 are the same. The original word is gregoreo, and is translated
to be vigilant' once, 'wake' once, 'watch' twenty times, and
'watchful' once; consequently 1 Thessalonians 5:10 should
read, 'Who died for us, that whether we be watchful or
drowsy, we should live together with Him', although, of
course, other Scriptures make it plain that the unwatchful
believer may not be granted to 'reign with Him', a doctrine
not in view in the chapter before us.

Here, therefore, is fact number four; that two essentially
different ideas are presented by the two different words
translated 'sleep' in Luke 8 and John 11, and must
therefore not be confounded.

There is, however, one further statement in Luke's
Gospel that demands attention. It is, 'And her spirit came
again' (Luke 8:55). It is to Mark's account of the raising
of Jairus' daughter that we are indebted for the fact that on
that occasion (Mark 5:41) the Saviour spoke Aramaic, not
Greek, from which it is clear that her parents and those
concerned were acquainted with the Hebrew Scriptures,
and familiar with its idiom. Having that in mind, let us
refer to 1 Samuel 30:11,12 where we read:

'And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to
David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him
drink water; and they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two
clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, HIS SPIRIT CAME AGAIN
to him'.

This passage proves that the expression in Luke 8:55
does not necessitate death.

We learn, therefore, that Lazarus was actually dead,
whereas, while the family and friends of the little maid
thought she was dead, they were mistaken. The word used
of Lazarus meant 'to fall asleep involuntarily', whereas the
word used of the little maid meant 'to sleep', not as the
dead, but as those who were in a coma or heavy sleep.
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